

Winter
2009

THE MAGAZINE OF WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

Western

A Novel Concept

LITERARY SPOTLIGHT
SHINES ON RON RASH





THE NEW CAT IN TOWN

After being introduced during halftime of Western Carolina's men's basketball game Jan. 29, the Catamount mascot is swarmed by fans in the Ramsey Regional Activity Center. Named "Paws," the mascot received a major facelift as the final piece of the university's recently launched brand, which includes new logos and themes for marketing and promotion of WCU and Catamount athletics.

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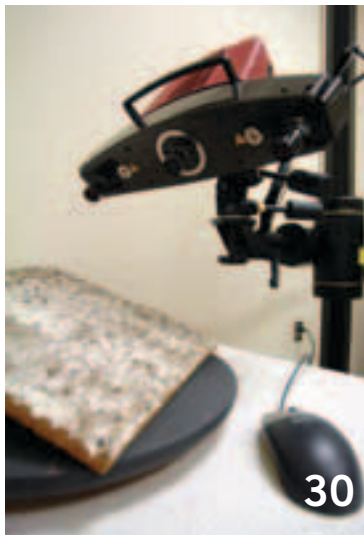
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Western

ON THE COVER

Ron Rash's Latest Book,
'Serena,' Thrusts Him into
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ENERGY STAR

Carbon 'Paw Print' Shrinks on Campus as Energy-Saving Strategies Take Effect

By TERESA KILLIAN

Al Laster, energy management specialist, and Lauren Bishop, energy manager, use a computer to schedule heating, air-conditioning and lighting in campus buildings.

From the keyboard of a laptop computer, Al Laster, energy management specialist, can program the lights in Stillwell Science Building or the Campus Recreation Center to turn on or off when the building is not in use or when the sun goes down. Laster's job is to help maximize the university's energy savings – not only to cut WCU's \$4.8 million annual energy bill, but also to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide and other emissions from the fossil fuels burned to power university activities.

"We must continue to take action to reduce our carbon footprint, or as we call it at WCU, our carbon paw print," said Lauren Bishop, energy manager. "It's not just about saving money, meeting state or federal requirements, or saving the planet. Climate change could affect such things as our food and water supply, and when you realize that, you realize every action we take to reduce our carbon footprints and our collective campus paw print is about saving the people. As humans, we tend to forget how delicate the balance of nature is in our daily lives."

WCU has made significant reductions in its carbon paw print in the last few years, achieving state-mandated energy and petroleum reduction goals years ahead of

schedule, said Bishop. Nine years prior to a 2015 deadline for state agencies to reduce annual energy consumption by 30 percent, Western Carolina met the goal. WCU was able to make a significant reduction in energy consumption by seizing an opportunity three years ago to tap into a natural gas pipeline and use natural gas to power the steam plant instead of No. 6 fuel oil, which is less energy-efficient. The university saved more than \$600,000 last year as a result of the switch. "Plus, the combustion of natural gas doesn't produce sulfur emissions, so our emissions are a lot lower," said Bill Manware, assistant director of the physical plant.

Two years before a deadline to cut petroleum use 20 percent, WCU already has done so. In the summer and fall of 2007, WCU reduced the amount of petroleum used by campus vehicles by purchasing biodiesel, a blend that is 20 percent vegetable oil and 80 percent diesel, and E10, a blend of ethanol and unleaded gas, for campus vehicles. Meanwhile, the university is expanding its fleet of neighborhood electric vehicles and promoting walking, biking, carpooling and driving practices that avoid unnecessary idling.

WCU also is incorporating energy-efficient measures into construction planning and building repairs and

"Conservation is key to reducing our carbon paw print, and key to conservation is awareness of what we can each do to reduce our energy use."

– Lauren Bishop
WCU energy manager

DID YOU KNOW?

- The university installed low-flow water fixtures in residential living areas that in two months saved more than 2.1 million gallons of water – a monthly savings of \$3,406.
- The temperature of campus buildings is reduced to 55 degrees when not in use.
- The campus has six neighborhood electric vehicles.
- WCU is one of 91 colleges and universities selected last year for a pilot study of a Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System developed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education.

maintenance. Initiatives range from replacing incandescent lightbulbs as needed with compact fluorescent lightbulbs to designing the planned health sciences building to meet the U.S. Green Building Council's silver Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED, certification requirements.

Campus energy conservation awareness efforts have included a WheeSAVE informational campaign, which has promoted such actions as turning lights off, and a student residence hall competition to reduce energy and water use. Student groups, including the Eco CATS, have sponsored conservation events, and Bishop and **Virginia Fowler '00 MPA '02**, assistant director for facilities with the residential living department, co-taught a class during the fall for the Eco PEAKS student living-learning community centered on promoting energy awareness.

In February, Western Carolina will participate in a national teach-in designed to generate discussion about solutions for global warming. Last year, the event drew more than 1,000 students, faculty and staff members.

This spring, Western Carolina will hire an energy services company to comprehensively assess campus energy use, identify conservation measures and install equipment or institute changes to reduce energy consumption. The cost of the project will be paid from money the university saves in energy costs as a result of the improvements, a method known as a performance contract. The energy savings are guaranteed by the energy services company, which absorbs the expenses if savings are not realized.

"Conservation is key to reducing our carbon paw print, and key to conservation is awareness of what we can each do to reduce our energy use," said Bishop.

Mac Minaudo of Blue Ridge Biofuels delivers biodiesel to WCU.



News From THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

CLASS CHANGE

A New Dean is Selected to Lead
Education and Allied Professions

By BILL STUDENC

The unit with the most direct link to Western Carolina's inception as a one-room schoolhouse 120 years ago will have a new leader as Perry L. Schoon, senior associate dean



Perry L. Schoon

of the College of Education at the University of Texas at Arlington, takes the reins of WCU's College of Education and Allied Professions on June 1. Schoon will succeed Michael Dougherty, dean since July 1998 and a faculty member at WCU since 1976.

"Western Carolina was founded as a teacher's college, and Perry Schoon will be leading the College of Education and Allied Professions at one of the most exciting times in its history," WCU Provost Kyle

Carter said. "He is joining us as we ratchet up our efforts to prepare a larger number of graduates for careers in education to help solve a statewide shortage of classroom teachers."

Schoon also will play a key role in planning a new building for the college – a facility that will combine the traditions of an institution born in the 19th century with the educational tools of the 21st century. "Because of Dr. Schoon's extensive background in technology, he will be a great asset to the faculty as it programs a building to create an enriched learning environment supported by technology," Carter said. The proposed 163,000-square-foot School of Education building will be located on Millennial Initiative property on the opposite side of N.C. Highway 107 from the main campus.

"I am truly honored and humbled to be chosen as the next leader of the College of Education and Allied Professions," Schoon said. "Both the college and university are rich in tradition and focused on excellence. I graduated from an institution that was first established as a teacher education institution, much like Western. There is something truly special about becoming a member of a university and specifically a college that has educated men and women who have in one way or another shaped the educational destinies of generations of children."

Schoon will guide a college that is growing its student enrollment and earning national recognition, including the 2007 Christa McAuliffe Excellence in Teacher Education Award, presented by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, and the 2006 Distinguished Program in Teacher Education Award, presented by the Association of Teacher Educators.

"I commend Dr. Dougherty for moving the college forward. His legacy and the college's legacy should be cherished, affirmed and continued," Schoon said. "I fully intend to continue this remarkable legacy, to nurture a community of teacher-scholars, and to promote a culture of collaboration and innovation. My goal is to lead a team of colleagues to achieve a forward-thinking vision that makes a genuine contribution to quality teaching and learning within both the local and broader education and allied professions communities. Education is a good parent and a good teacher. It can change the future and build a good society."

SLIP SLIDIN' AWAY

Slope Movement Research Project
May Guide Road Development in WNC

By RANDALL HOLCOMBE

A fast-moving mountain landslide called a "debris flow" killed five people in Macon County's Peaks Creek community after hurricanes Ivan and Frances brought torrential rains to Western North Carolina in September 2004, but it is another type of less-understood slope failure that is the focus of a long-term research project involving WCU geology students and faculty, and two state agencies. The students and faculty are conducting research at the site of a "big, slow mover" – a slope creeping downhill at rates measured in centimeters and millimeters per year – in the Hunters Crossing subdivision near Waynesville.

Intense rain causes debris flows, but there does not seem to be a simple answer to what triggers the slow-motion failure of some slopes, said Cheryl Waters-Tormey, an assistant professor leading the WCU research team along with Dave Kinner, a hydrologist and assistant professor. The slow-movers are much less of a threat to human life than debris flows, but they can cause just as much damage to structures, Waters-Tormey said. Partners in the project are the state's Geological Survey and Department of Transportation.



The Hunters Crossing development consists of four condominium duplexes on about three acres of land. Slope movement was first reported in November 2005 by residents who had experienced water-line breaks and noted fracturing in the foundations of two structures and in the development's paved road. Four residences are now unoccupied because of structural damage and potential danger, including two homes that are not part of the condominium development, but lie at the base of the failing slope, Waters-Tormey said.

The study involves an examination of possible causes of the slope failure, including an analysis of the types of materials found in the slope and the behavior of water as it passes through those materials, along with a look at soil characteristics, bedrock structure, daily rainfall amounts, and movement of reference points on the slope. In January 2008, two 3-inch diameter holes were drilled

down to bedrock at the site. The students are using those holes to monitor groundwater levels and, with the use of an inclinometer, measure movement rates at various depths inside the sliding mass.

Since preliminary work began at the site in spring 2007, the team has recorded a lessening in movement of the slope that coincides with the drought that has gripped the region, but it's too early to tell if the slope movement is directly linked to soil moisture, Waters-Tormey said.

State transportation officials plan to use the research findings to improve the planning of new roads and mitigation of existing slowly failing slopes. Waters-Tormey said the WCU students' research also will have applications for well-drilling in the region, because the findings will increase knowledge about how water moves through the subsurface in the mountains.

Faculty hydrologist Dave Kinner (above, right) and senior Preston Jacobsen download rainfall data in Hunters Crossing while Assistant Professor Cheryl Waters-Tormey (below, right) and Katelyn Sutcliffe '08 check fractures in the foundation of a home in the subdivision.



HEY Y'ALL, READ THIS

WCU and Ohio State Dialect Study
Examines Changes in Speech Patterns

By TERESA KILLIAN

Audrey Greene was surprised in 1982 when, standing in line at the World's Fair in Tennessee, strangers asked her to talk again so they could hear her "Southern drawl." "There were a lot of people from a lot of countries there with a lot of different dialects, and it was sort of odd that they picked out ours," said Greene, who has spent her life in Haywood and Jackson counties. "I guess you kind of think at first that because you talk this way and understand what other people are saying that they are talking just like you are."

Studying how sensitive listeners are to differences in how vowels are pronounced in different dialects is part of the next phase of a research study led by The Ohio State University and taking place, in part, at Western Carolina University. The project was designed to compare dialects in Western North Carolina, Central Ohio and Wisconsin, and changes in dialect from generation to generation. Greene was one of more than 200 participants, ranging in age from 8 to 93, who came to Western Carolina's speech and hearing center to participate in the first phase. She and others were recorded as they pronounced words such as "head" and "hide," read sentences and told a story of their own choosing.

WCU recently received a \$15,000 grant to continue with the perception phase of the study, which was initially funded by a \$1.8 million grant from the National Institutes of Health. Participants will listen through a headset to words and record their responses on a computer. Janaye Houghton, a speech-language pathologist serving as a research associate for the project at WCU, is searching for volunteers to participate in the study who are lifelong residents of Western North Carolina between the ages of 9 and 13, and age 50 and older.

"One of the goals is to see whether language is changing here, and language development processes in general," said Robert Fox, professor and chair of speech and hearing science at Ohio State. The results of the research project could help improve standardized tests for speech and hearing or improve voice recognition systems that understand spoken commands such as "voice mail" or "yes." Another benefit is simply the historical preservation of how people speak in a region, the researchers said.

Greene said she thinks such studies are important as a way to preserve the dialect. She remembers when a junior high English teacher discouraged students from using words such as "reckon" and "y'all" that were not commonly said in other places. "As you get older, you appreciate who you are and your roots, and you appreciate the dialect," said Greene. "It makes you different, and the difference is something you want to hold onto and not forget."



Hear examples of speakers from each region by clicking on "Vowel Corner" on the left side of the Web site www.spalabs.org.



From left, researchers Janaye Houghton, research associate at WCU; Robert Fox, professor and chair of speech and hearing science at The Ohio State University; and Ewa Jacewicz, principal investigator and research scientist at Ohio State, record a speaker at WCU as part of a dialect study.



PROGRESSIVE TENSE

WCU Professors Team Up to Edit
'The New Politics of North Carolina'

By BILL STUDENC

A new book edited by two Western Carolina political scientists examines the changing face of politics in North Carolina and revisits the state's long-standing progressive reputation in light of transformations in Old North State politics over the past 50 years. "The New Politics of North Carolina," edited by WCU's Christopher Cooper and Gibbs Knotts, features a collection of 11 essays by leading scholars of N.C. politics. Published last year by the University of North Carolina Press, the book is designed to offer a systematic analysis of the state's political and policy-making processes within the context of N.C. history, and the history and politics of other states.

Topics examined in the book include the evolution of political institutions; roles of the governor, the Legislature and the courts; the impact of interest groups and political parties; and economic development and environmental issues. "We found that there was a lack of scholarly work on North Carolina," said Cooper, who directs WCU's master's degree program in public affairs and the Public Policy Institute. "We saw a real opportunity to bring a group of top scholars together to consider the major institutions and policies in North Carolina politics."

The book serves as an introduction to contemporary state government and politics, and should be of interest to N.C. college students and professors – and to people who simply want to learn more about N.C. politics, he said. "State politics is a wonderful subfield of political science, a place to learn about how we can design institutions to maximize representation and democratic values," Cooper said. "We also think it demonstrates some valuable lessons about the place of North Carolina in a changing South."

Knotts, head of Western's department of political science and public affairs, said that the book's essays challenge

conventional wisdom about politics and policy in North Carolina. "In 1949, renowned political scientist V.O. Key described North Carolina as a 'progressive plutocracy' and argued that, compared to other Southern states, North Carolina was more progressive in the areas of industrial development, public education and race relations," said Knotts. "Nearly 60 years later, our contributors find the state is losing ground as a progressive leader in the South. New opportunities and challenges have forced the state to change, but the old culture remains a powerful influence."

William V. Moore of the College of Charleston called the book "a valuable addition to the scholarly literature on North Carolina government and politics" and "an essential text for students interested in the politics of the state." Praising the volume as "a very fine collection," Thad L. Beyle of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill said, "All the authors of the individual chapters have experience teaching and researching in the Old North State. They have a very solid understanding of the state, its politics and how certain things operate."

Gibbs Knotts (above) and Christopher Cooper (below) are challenging conventional wisdom about state politics in their new book.



A Novel Concept

With His Novel 'Serena' Winning National Acclaim from Critics and Readers, Ron Rash Pays Homage to His Roots and Wades Into the Literary Big Time

By RANDALL HOLCOMBE

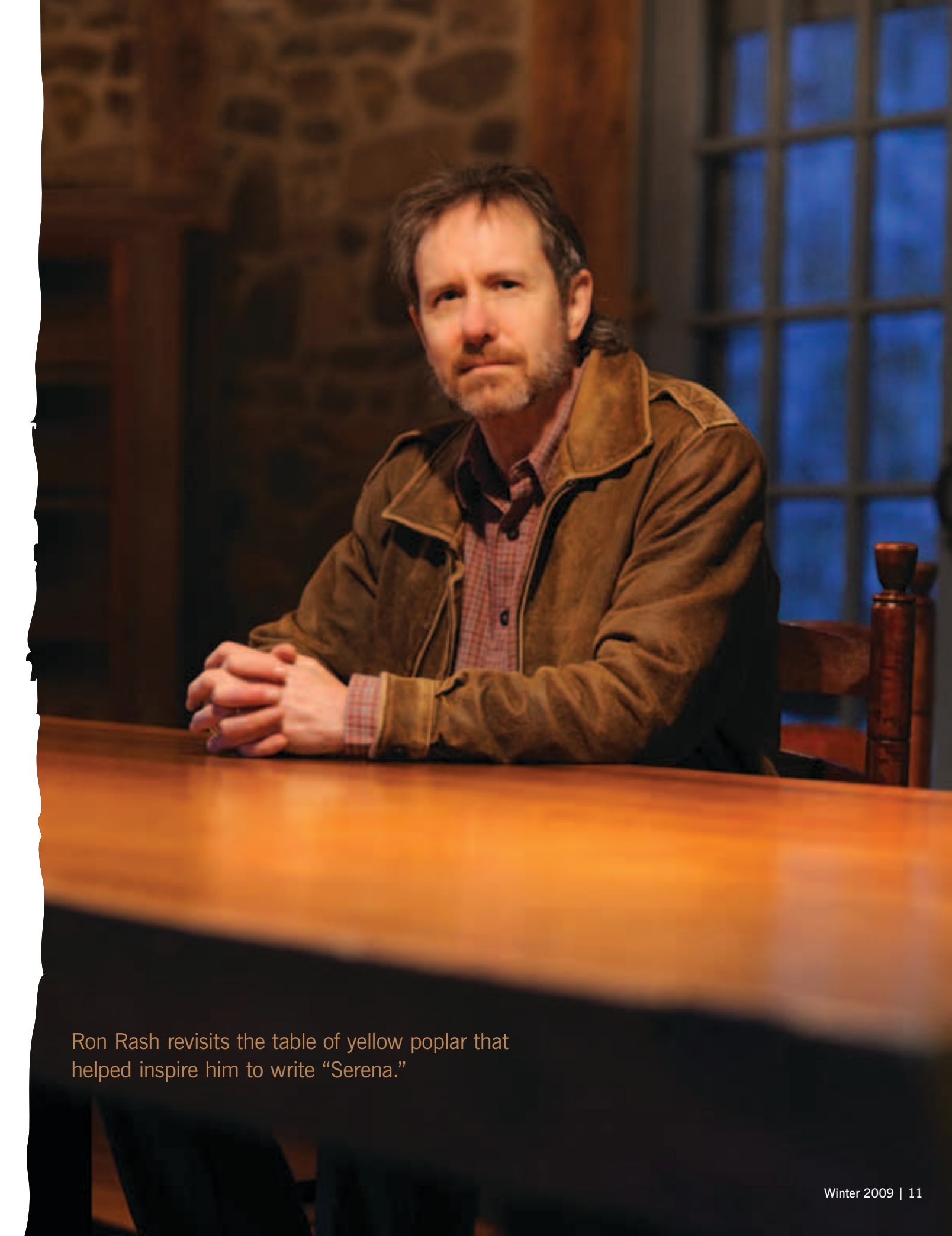
Ron Rash's rise to national literary prominence was inspired by a man who could neither read nor write. As WCU's Parris Distinguished Professor of Appalachian Culture gathers critical acclaim for his novel "Serena," he remembers his late grandfather, James Rash, a hard-working farm boy from Buncombe County who never had the opportunity to become educated, but who taught his grandson the magic of words.

Ron Rash has written about "one of the most remarkable moments of my life" that occurred when he was 5 years old, before he learned to read.

It was a warm summer evening and my grandfather, still dressed in his work clothes, was smoking a Camel cigarette as he lingered at the kitchen table after a hard day's work. When I handed my grandfather the red and blue book ("The Cat and the Hat") and asked him to read to me, he did not offer any excuse, not even the most obvious one. Instead, he laid the open book on the table before us, peering over my shoulder as he turned the pages with his work-and-nicotine-stained fingers, and I heard the story of a talking cat and his high, blue-striped hat.

What he had done was make up a story to fit the pictures that lay on the pages before us. Not surprisingly, I quickly realized that the story he was reading was very different from the one my mother had read from the same book.

The effectiveness of my grandfather's performance was verified by my begging him to read "The Cat and the Hat" again the following Sunday. His story was different this time. The cat got into more trouble, and out of it less easily. At every opportunity in the following weeks, I ambushed my grandfather so I might hear what new events might occur in this cat's ever-changing life. How could I not grow up believing words were magical? How could I not want to be a writer?



Ron Rash revisits the table of yellow poplar that helped inspire him to write “Serena.”



“Serena is the book I worked on the hardest.
It’s nice to get a good response.”

— Ron Rash

As he sits in his Coulter Building office, surrounded by books, it is obvious that Ron Rash is a writer who doesn’t enjoy talking about himself, but loves to speak of family roots that go deep into the mountains. A son of Buncombe and Watauga County natives, Rash was raised in Boiling Springs and the South Carolina town of Chester, where his family lived from time to time to take advantage of the work available in the textile mill. His grandparents never had the opportunity to go to college, but Rash’s parents went back to school as working adults and earned degrees. Rash says it was a family expectation that he would attend college after his high school graduation.

“They tried to do better for the next generation,” Rash said. “I think one of the reasons I write is that it’s an act of gratitude that the people who came before me sacrificed so much.”

Rash made his first serious attempt at creative writing when he was a student at Gardner-Webb University. His mind and energies previously had been focused on running track in high school and college, but he had been a voracious reader all along. “One day I sat down and thought, ‘Why don’t I try this and see what happens?’” Rash said. The result wasn’t anything to get excited about, but he kept at it and discovered that his athletic background helped him when he faced the dreaded blank page. “Having been an athlete was a great advantage because it taught me discipline,” he said. “You need day-in and day-out discipline to do both.”

And so, Rash combined the tough-mindedness acquired in his athletic pursuits with his love and appreciation for the natural and human history of the Southern Appalachians to launch a literary career while he taught in high schools and colleges across the region. He earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in English, and wrote three collections of poetry

THE WRITE STUFF

WCU's Annual Spring Literary Festival
Will Feature Faculty and Visiting Authors

Faculty members Robert Conley, Pamela Duncan and Ron Rash are among the authors who will be featured at WCU's seventh annual Spring Literary Festival, sponsored by the department of English.

Readings by the authors, open to the public free of charge, will be held Monday, March 30, through Thursday, April 2.

Rash, WCU's Parris Distinguished Professor of Appalachian Culture, will join Duncan, assistant professor in the English department, in a presentation at 4 p.m. on April 2. Conley, the university's Sequoyah Distinguished Professor of Cherokee Studies, will give a reading from his work at noon March 30.

Other writers scheduled to appear at the festival are poets **C.S. Carrier '98** and Brian Brodeur; novelists A. Manette Ansay, Jeffrey Lent, Steve Yarbrough and Jewell Parker Rhodes; nonfiction writer and reporter Scott Huler; and natural history essayist Jan DeBlieu. Also on the agenda is a reading by student poets.



For more information, contact the English department at (828) 227-7264, e-mail Mary Adams, associate professor, at madams@email.wcu.edu or visit www.litfestival.org.

and two collections of short stories, before transitioning to writing a series of critically acclaimed and award-winning novels. He joined Western's faculty in 2003, coming back to his family's homeland in the mountains, "my true home."

This past November, Rash learned that "Serena," his fourth novel, had been named to the Publishers Weekly "Best Books of the Year" list, and that the novel had come in at No. 7 on the online retailer Amazon's list of the 100 best books of 2008. Those accolades have been accompanied by a burst of complimentary reviews in newspapers and magazines across the nation, including The New York Times, in which reviewer Janet Maslin listed "Serena" as one of her 10 favorite books of 2008 and praised Rash's "elegantly fine-tuned voice." The book also has made the "best of 2008" lists of The Christian Science Monitor, The Washington Post and San Francisco Chronicle.

"Serena" tells the story of a timber baron, George Pemberton, and his ruthless wife, Serena, who come to the North Carolina mountains to create a timber empire. Rash says each of his three previous novels were inspired by a single image that came to his mind, but "Serena"

started with two images: a huge table that he saw at a resort in Waynesville that had been hewn from a single piece of yellow poplar, and an image of a woman riding a ridge crest on a "magnificent white stallion" that popped into his head while he was driving through the mountains. That woman is his fictional Serena.

Novelist Pat Conroy has stated that "Serena" "catapults (Rash) to the front ranks of the best American novelists." Rash says the praise for the novel is encouraging. "It's the book I worked on the hardest. It's nice to get a good response," he said.

As the literary accolades come his way, Rash stays busy as he teaches Appalachian literature and creative writing at WCU, and continues to prepare his next published work, a collection of short stories. With the October release of "Serena," he is being called upon more often to present readings across the country, and in recent months has been to Boston, Portland, Ore., and Cincinnati. "The best part of that is getting to meet writers I admire," Rash said.



THE WRITERS BLOC

Western Carolina's English Department Proves Fertile Literary Ground

By SARAH KUCHARSKI

Critical favorite Ron Rash is in good company in the WCU English department, home to a host of prolific, acclaimed writers with accolades listed under their names.

Newcomer Pamela Duncan, teacher of creative writing and fiction, is author of "The Big Beautiful," and she has two other novels, "Moon Women" and "Plant Life." Winner of the James Still Award from the Fellowship of Southern Writers in 2007 and the Sir Walter Raleigh Award for Fiction in 2003, Duncan is lauded as a rising literary voice. "In the tradition of Fannie Flagg and Rebecca Wells comes a Southern-fried debut. ... Duncan shows promise as a from-the-heart, quirky storyteller," says Publishers Weekly. Author Silas House calls Duncan's latest work "so hilarious, so heartrending, and so honest that I sometimes had to shake my head in satisfaction while reading it. 'Moon Women' is the kind of book that becomes beloved."

Poet Mary Adams teaches literature, and creative and professional writing, and she is the author of "Epistles from the Planet Photosynthesis." "Mary Adams' voice leaps out of these poems like a live wire," writes a Charlotte Observer reviewer. "Read Mary Adams for direct action, her ability to pour strong feelings into simple language." Adams has directed WCU's Spring Literary Festival (see related story, page 13) for several years. She has published many poems and won a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship.

Fellow poet Catherine Carter's book "The Memory of Gills" "exudes a genuinely classical quality – cool-eyed and clear-eyed, intelligent, unsentimental, self-aware, and witty in the fullest and best sense," hails publisher Louisiana State University Press. "'The Memory of Gills' is altogether an astonishing, seductive, and finally irresistible book of poems," says Kathryn Stripling Byer, N.C. poet laureate, who lives in Cullowhee. Winner of the Roanoke-Chowan Award from the N.C. Literary and Historical Society, Carter teaches education, writing and literature courses, and she publishes and researches in poetry, American literature and English education.

Deidre Elliott serves as faculty adviser to the Nomad, Western's literary magazine. Elliott's published work includes nonfiction in top literary journals, and contributions to collections such as "Getting Over the Color Green: Contemporary Environmental Literature of the Southwest" and books such as "1001 Things Everyone Should Know about Women's History." The Chicago Tribune said of this book: "Oprah Winfrey, Simone de Beauvoir and Sappho are just a few of the women noted in this enthralling encyclopedia-like collection." Elliott has been invited to read at national conferences for environmental literature.

Brian Railsback, professor of English and founding dean of the Honors College, teaches courses in 20th-century and contemporary American literature as well as creative and professional writing courses. Railsback is the author of "Parallel Expeditions: Charles Darwin and the Art of John Steinbeck" and the novel "The Darkest Clearing," which won praise from former N.C. poet laureate Fred Chappell. "It charmed me out of myself each time I picked it up. It's a helluva ride. I enjoyed it immensely," Chappell said.

In addition, Robert Conley, who holds Western's Sequoyah Distinguished Professorship in Cherokee Studies, has authored work in more than 80 books, including "The Cherokee Nation: A History," which was selected by the American Library Association as one of the outstanding academic titles of 2005, and "Cherokee Medicine Man," a 2007 nominee for the Oklahoma Reads Oklahoma competition.

The lineup of literary talent means that students not only get to study about great writers, they get to study with great writers, said English department head Elizabeth Addison. "The creative atmosphere around these writers and teachers is infectious," Addison said. "I see them nurturing and encouraging writers and watch the students blossom – even move into print themselves. When the Spring Literary Festival comes along, we are all intoxicated with stories and words."

SIMPLY ELEMENTARY

English Professor Rick Boyer Pens a Collection of New Sherlock Holmes Tales

By BILL STUDENC

Some 30 years after developing his writing skills through a series of literary exercises imitating a storyteller he calls the greatest of the past century, award-winning novelist Rick Boyer has seen his career come full circle.

Recently retired from the WCU English department, Boyer is author of "The Quintessential Sherlock Holmes," a collection of five full-length stories based upon the legendary detective created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Returning to his literary roots was, well, simply elementary for an author whose career highlights range from an Edgar Allan Poe Award for Best Novel presented by the Mystery Writers of America for the first work in his popular Doc Adams mystery series, to critical acclaim and commercial success for his best-selling nonfiction work *Places Rated Almanac*.

"Basically, Sherlock Holmes is and remains the greatest consulting detective the world has ever known," said Boyer. "I thought that since I was going to give it my best to become an author, I had better select the ideal author to act as my example and my mentor." Boyer's debut novel, "The Giant Rat of Sumatra," was first published in 1976 in paperback. Based on a famous Sherlockian adventure mentioned in passing in Doyle's "The Sussex Vampire," the story was hailed by the late John Bennett Shaw as "the best and most authentic modern Sherlock Holmes tale yet written."

"I never thought this book would last over a year's time in the marketplace – especially in the crime and suspense marketplace, which is very, very tough," Boyer said. "But 30 years have come and gone, and guess what? 'Giant Rat' has been continuously in print for 33 years, and it remains published all over the globe in many languages."

Even as he turned his attention to the Doc Adams mystery series – a sequence of nine novels centered on the misadventures of a New England oral surgeon who frequently finds himself in the midst of murder, mayhem

and mystery – Boyer continued to also write novellas featuring Sherlock Holmes. "I wanted to open cases never seen before in the public eye," he said. Those works are now published together for the first time in "The Quintessential Sherlock Holmes," a limited edition tome featuring leather binding and Kevlar slipcase. It is published by Alexander Books of North Carolina.

"I have had no major feelings of apprehension about following in the footsteps of Arthur Conan Doyle," Boyer said. "I had some trepidation, to be sure, but soon found myself engaged and engrossed with Victorian England, London and the English countryside. After all, Sherlock Holmes will never die. He'll never even catch a cold."

Rick Boyer relaxes in the study of his Waynesville home.





CHINA SYNDROME

WCU Partners with Chinese Universities to Create New Opportunities for Students and Faculty

中国 综合症状

Driving from the airport to downtown Shanghai took about an hour. Riding back on the MagLev high-speed train took eight minutes, and Provost Kyle Carter snapped pictures of a sign reporting the train's speed as it accelerated to 190 mph. "The train was smooth, quiet and fast," said Carter, who was intrigued by the level of infrastructure in China as well as the welcoming, entrepreneurial spirit of the people he met during a trip to the country with a delegation from WCU. "China obviously is a big player in the world today, and it's a place we and our students need to understand."

With Chinese language courses being offered at WCU and a growing number of courses available for English-speaking students at Chinese universities, the time is right to expand partnerships, exchange programs and international research collaborations, said Lois Petrovich-Mwaniki, director of International Programs and Services at WCU. The delegation visited universities across China. Now, agreements that took months to develop are being finalized with five universities in Guilin, Shanghai, Xi'an, Chongqing and Dalian to open the door to new opportunities for student and faculty exchanges, faculty visits and programs in China led by WCU faculty for WCU students.

Delegates also seized the opportunity during the trip to recruit prospective students such as Zijing "Ginger" Qin of Chongqing. James Zhang, associate dean of WCU's Kimmel School and a native of China, often speaks to prospective students from China over the phone, but this trip enabled him to meet with Qin in person. She enrolled at Western Carolina this fall as an electrical engineering graduate student. She said she was attracted by the university's facilities, and accessible and approachable faculty members, and added that she is happy she chose WCU. "The most challenging things about my experience so far, I guess, are language adjusting and getting involved in studying a new research topic," said Qin.

Zhang expressed hope that increasing interaction between WCU students and Chinese students such as Qin would help Western Carolina students better understand the increasingly global nature of the marketplace and what it will take to succeed. That understanding is critical for students, said Carter. "Our world is truly interdependent, and our students are going to be cheated if they don't get a better perspective of where Cullowhee, North Carolina and the United States fit within the global perspective, and the only way to do that is to travel, to interact and to study different cultures," he said.

That's why WCU is fostering relationships and forging partnerships with universities in China with the intent of soon offering students and faculty additional opportunities to study, work and visit in that country.



At top, delegates from WCU visit Chongqing Technology and Business University. At far left, James Zhang, associate dean of WCU's Kimmel School, Ronald A. Johnson, dean of the College of Business, and Provost Kyle Carter meet with university officials in China. At near left, children look over the railing of a bridge in Beijing's Forbidden City.

AN EVOLVING EXPERIMENT

Former Classmates Reunite to Retool Science Education

JILL INGRAM MA '08

Kefyn Catley MS '91 and **Randi Neff BSEd '88 MS '90** first met as graduate students in Western Carolina's biology program. Nearly two decades later, the two have reunited as teachers on a mission to improve the quality of secondary and college science education in the United States.

Catley, after a "long, circuitous route to come back here," including earning a doctorate from Cornell University in 1996, joined WCU's faculty in 2007 as associate professor of biology and head of the secondary science education program. Neff is in her seventh year teaching biology at Haywood County's Tuscola High School, where this spring approximately 80 sophomore science students will begin participating in a three-year project with the ultimate aim of retooling high school and college biology curricula.

Catley and collaborator Laura R. Novick, professor of cognitive psychology at Vanderbilt University, are funding the research project with a \$665,247 grant from the U.S. Department of Education. In addition to Western Carolina, Tuscola and Vanderbilt, the University of California at Santa Barbara is part of the collaborative effort.

Catley and Neff have remained in touch since their graduate school days. They both spent the summer of 1991 working with Western Carolina's former Upward Bound program, which promoted science among high school students. While Neff had a desire to pursue her doctorate, she was married and raising young children. "I didn't think it was practical for me to pursue a further degree," said Neff, whose husband is Jeffrey Neff, associate professor of geography at WCU. "I would have had to leave Cullowhee, but my children were growing up here."

She remained on the Upward Bound staff for nine years, as the program grew to 50 students across the Southeast. Catley went on to pursue his doctorate, but would return to host seminars for the students. "He would participate in whatever way he could," Neff said.

Catley's specialty was evolutionary biology, and after his doctoral program he took a position as a research scientist at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. His job required working with teachers, and when he began to realize how little they knew about his subject, he developed an interest in education in evolutionary biology, with a focus on helping students better understand the processes and principles of that topic.

Catley contends that many students – and their teachers – have a poor understanding of macroevolution, the study of change that occurs at or above the level of species over a long duration. Microevolution, in contrast, is the study of smaller evolutionary changes within a species or population across a shorter span of time. For example, a microevolutionary theory would explain how the beaks of a small population of birds changed over a decade. A macroevolutionary



Kefyn Catley MS '91, with a Tuscola High School student, is leading a study on how to improve science education.



Catley and Tuscola High School teacher Randi Neff '88 MS '90, right, are working together to develop a stronger biology curriculum.

theory would explain how birds evolved as a group. Without a firm grasp of macroevolution, Catley said, students lack an understanding of the comprehensive history of life on the planet.

The initial phase of the Tuscola portion of the study will focus on diagnostics to determine how students think in evolutionary terms. Eventually, Neff will implement a new curriculum that the researchers develop based on study findings. The new curriculum, which likely will exceed state requirements, should “help correct misperceptions and encourage thinking about species in a more dynamic way,” Neff said. She will test the curriculum in her classroom, as will biology students at Western Carolina. Catley chose Tuscola to join the study because of his association with Neff. “Since I’m somebody that he’s known for a long time, it was logical once he got here to ask me to help out with the high school element,” Neff said.

Catley’s goal is for widespread implementation of science curricula that will produce better and stronger science students nationwide. As Catley sees it, improving science literacy is important because understanding both the content and workings of science is key to a healthy economy

and functioning democracy in the United States. “If you want to work in a well-paid job these days, you really need to be literate in science,” said Catley. “A good understanding of science underpins democracy.”

While some segments of society might resist broadening evolutionary education because of its sometimes controversial nature, biologists argue it’s critical to both filling the ranks of U.S. scientists and keeping the United States competitive worldwide. The nature of worldwide competition makes strengthening science education a logical goal, said James Costa, WCU professor of biology and director of the Highlands Biological Station. “There are many countries, both industrialized and nonindustrialized, that provide their populations with rigorous scientific training, and these people are hungry for progress,” Costa said. “There is a danger with science education in this country that it’s not of the same rigor in the college preparatory level that you see with our main competitor countries.”

CHARTING THE COURSE OF LIFE

Much of the research of **Kefyn Catley MS '91** focuses on the role of diagrams in helping students comprehend evolution. Called cladograms, these diagrams can illustrate with branching lines the origin and fate of species and natural groups of species, the persistence of some and the extinction of others. A cladogram might provide evidence, for example, of how birds are modern dinosaurs.

Comprehending these diagrams is called “tree thinking,” or the habit of calling on knowledge of the history of life on Earth as evidence as one constructs a hierarchical model of the natural world. The diagrams are the backbone of understanding macroevolution, which is required for understanding the full spectrum of evolution. But while professionals have used cladograms for years, the diagrams, which biologists consider testable hypotheses (not fact), to a large degree are not used in life science education.

CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

MERIT SYSTEM

Student Scholarship Recipients Say Thanks to Those Who Help Them Pay Their Tuition Bills

By BILL STUDENC

When about 150 Western Carolina students, professors, administrators, friends and benefactors gathered recently for a special luncheon in the A.K. Hinds University Center,

it was more than just an opportunity to enjoy a nice meal. The inaugural Endowed Scholarship Luncheon also gave many recipients of WCU merit-based scholarships a chance to thank some of the people whose contributions to the university are helping them meet the costs of getting that degree.

"For many of the students here today, a college education would not be possible without the philanthropic support of our alumni and friends," said **Phillip D. Walker '71**, BB&T senior vice president and chair of the Western Carolina University Foundation board of directors. "We are here to

thank those who have provided so much for so many. It's going to pay off great dividends on down the road." The more than 190 endowed scholarship funds on the books at WCU benefit more than 400 students annually, Walker said.

Endowed scholarships help students such as Brittany Haskett, a freshman construction management major from Sylva. "For me, getting scholarship money was a huge factor in determining where I would go to school," said Haskett, who was among the student speakers at the luncheon. "A good education doesn't come cheap, but getting to major in something that I am passionate about is priceless. I am so grateful for all of the scholarships that were given to me." Haskett is the recipient of the Deborah J. Bardo Employee Scholarship, Kimmel Scholarship and Staff Forum Scholarship.

Andrew Daniel, a senior from Elizabethtown majoring in business administration and law, is attending the university thanks to the College of Business Scholarship and the Family Association Scholarship. "Despite all of the organizations I have been a part of at Western and the first-class education I've received, I would not be here if it were not for one thing – all of you," Daniel told the crowd gathered for the event. "By receiving these scholarships, my family and I were relieved of much pressure, stress and struggle. Every little bit truly does help. All of the donors to Western Carolina have given students like me the opportunity to obtain what we are all here for – a degree, which is the springboard to the future."

Walker, who served as master of ceremonies for the luncheon, used scholarships as the springboard for his future into the banking industry. "I can certainly relate to what these students have said. Growing up, I really had no



Scholarship recipient Andrew Daniel thanks WCU's benefactors.



(Clockwise, from top left) Martin Davis, recipient of the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce Scholarship, meets Julie Spiro '98, the chamber's executive director; Elissa Brown '02 congratulates Scott and Shirley Border Scholarship recipient Candace Pulliam; Abigail Brown, recipient of the Barbara Dooley Piano Scholarship, entertains the luncheon crowd.

sense of direction, but my English teacher told me, 'You're going to college,' he said. "But I didn't have the money to go to college. Thanks to a saintly grandmother who had submitted my name to the scholarship committee at my church, and thanks to donors like you people here today, I was able to go to WCU." Later in his career, Walker and his wife, **Joan Walker '71**, decided to give something back to the university, endowing a scholarship fund for students from Catawba County.

As the university continues its \$40 million Campaign for Western, the first comprehensive fundraising effort in the institution's history, it is gearing up for the next phase of the campaign, which will focus on significantly increasing private support for endowed scholarships, Chancellor John W. Bardo said. "Western has, since its inception, been about our students, their educational experiences and how we prepare them for the future. The reason we must focus so much on scholarships is that many of our students in North Carolina simply do not have the financial wherewithal to go to school. But we know there is no connection between ability to pay and ability to succeed," Bardo said.

That is why he and wife Deborah created an endowed scholarship fund to help WCU employees and their children attend the university. "We wanted to be sure that the best and brightest of the people who grew up here had a chance to stay here, to learn here, and become the leaders of tomorrow here," he said. "So far, the Campaign for Western has focused on creating endowed professorships to help attract world-class faculty to the university. Now we want to assure that these world-class faculty will have the opportunity to teach world-class students."



For more information on endowed scholarships, contact Jim Miller, associate vice chancellor for development, at (828) 227-7124.

CREATING *extraordinary*
OPPORTUNITIES
THE CAMPAIGN FOR WESTERN CAROLINA



John A. Allison IV, chairman and chief executive officer of BB&T, meets with a group of Western Carolina business students.

A CAPITAL IDEA

\$1 Million in Contributions from the BB&T Foundation
Will Create a New Professorship and Fund Student Projects

By BILL STUDENC

A \$1 million contribution from the BB&T Foundation will enable the College of Business to develop a program focusing on the study of leadership, ethics and capitalism. The gift includes funds to create a new distinguished professorship in capitalism and a pool of grant money for student and faculty research.

"We are honored to join the distinguished group of institutions that have received support from the BB&T Foundation," said Ronald A. Johnson, dean of the college. "This gift will enhance the educational experience of our undergraduate and graduate students, the intellectual development and experience of our faculty, and thought-leadership within our region."

The BB&T Distinguished Professorship in Capitalism will be endowed at the \$1 million level through gifts totaling \$500,000 from the philanthropic arm of the BB&T Corp., among the nation's largest financial services companies. WCU will seek \$500,000 in state matching funds through a program initiated by the General Assembly to encourage private support of public institutions of higher education.

Additional gifts totaling \$500,000, payable over five years beginning in 2010, will allow WCU to provide four annual awards of at least \$500 each to support student research and creative work in the area of leadership, ethics and capitalism, and to create an award program for faculty members engaged in scholarly work focused on those same issues. "The student projects that these contributions will help fund need not be traditional research papers," Johnson said. "They could be plays or other creative endeavors that deal with business ethics."

The intent of the contributions is to encourage a thorough discussion of the moral foundations of capitalism in a manner that enables students to be informed about all points of view, including the philosophy of objectivism as portrayed by Ayn Rand in her classic novel "Atlas Shrugged" and in her essays, said John A. Allison IV, chairman and chief executive officer of BB&T.

The agreement calls for the possible creation of undergraduate and graduate courses on the moral and ethical foundation of capitalism, which would be established through faculty governance procedures for new courses and curricula. It also recommends, but does not require, faculty members teaching those courses to consider assigning portions of "Atlas Shrugged" and other writings from pro-and anti-capitalist perspectives.

Although similar gifts to other institutions have raised concerns about potential donor influence on academic curriculum, the agreement with WCU was structured to avoid such worries – especially after a follow-up memorandum to clarify language in the original document was crafted with faculty input, said Provost Kyle Carter. "This contribution is designed to give our students exposure to a wide variety of views on capitalism and philosophies that will help provide an intellectual foundation for careers in business and other areas," Carter said. "The agreement satisfies the donor's wishes by requesting business faculty to consider including Ayn Rand's works in their classes as appropriate, while recognizing that the tenets of academic freedom and integrity demand that all curriculum decisions remain within the sole purview of the faculty."

LIVING LARGESSE

Wallace and Jeanette Hyde's Latest Gifts to WCU Push Their Giving Total to \$2.5 Million

By LEILA TVEDT

Western Carolina students who earn scholarships in the future for international travel will have **Wallace Hyde '49 MA '53** and former U.S. Ambassador Jeanette Hyde to thank. The Hydес recently set aside \$750,000 from their estates to support study abroad opportunities for WCU students. Wallace Hyde also recently provided a \$1 million gift for football scholarships, payable over the next five years. The gifts – part of the Campaign for Western, a \$40 million fundraising effort launched in February 2007 – bring their lifetime support for academic and athletic programs at Western to a grand total of \$2.5 million.

In addition, the Hydес have been deeply involved in the governance of the university. Wallace Hyde was a longtime member and chair of WCU's board of trustees, and he continues to serve on the board of the Western Carolina University Foundation. Jeannette Hyde – who served from 1994 until 1998 as U.S. ambassador to seven Eastern Caribbean nations – also has been a member of the board of trustees. Together, they have contributed more of their resources, time and energy than any other couple in Catamount history, said Jim Miller, associate vice chancellor for development.

The Hydес' connection with the university began more than 60 years ago when Wallace, a native of nearby Graham County, came to WCU on a football scholarship. "I got a partial scholarship in football and the opportunity to work at about 10 to 15 cents an hour," he said. "So Western did make it possible for me to get a college education." Called away by his military service in World War II, he returned to Cullowhee and earned a bachelor's degree in physical education and master's degree in public school

administration while serving as a high school coach and teacher. After he earned a doctorate at New York University, Wallace Hyde came back to North Carolina, launched a number of successful businesses and became active behind the scenes in state and national politics. As his fortunes grew, so did his contributions to Western. When he married Jeanette in 1985, she, too, became an enthusiastic and generous supporter of the university.

Recipients of their gifts to WCU include several scholarships and memorial funds, the College of Business, Alumni Association, Catamount Club, marching band, and the Loyalty Fund. Wallace Hyde, who received an honorary doctorate of education from WCU in 2002, provided contributions in 2005 to create an endowed professorship in gerontological social work in his wife's name.

In recognition of the Hydес' longtime generosity, the couple was honored at Homecoming 2008 with a replica of the football jersey Wallace Hyde wore when he played for the Catamounts in 1941 and a football helmet with the new Catamount logo.

"An even more powerful tribute than those symbols of the university's gratitude is the certainty that the Hydес' gifts will continue to help Western students and faculty for years to come," Miller said. "We are grateful for the commitment that Wallace and Jeanette Hyde have made to the university's future."

"The Hydес' gifts will continue to help Western students and faculty for years to come."

—Jim Miller



Jeannette and Wallace Hyde '49 MA '53 accept a WCU football helmet from Chancellor John Bardo as Chip Smith, director of athletics, watches.

WCU Alumni Association Announces

NORTH CAROLINA DISTRICT 1

Alleghany, Alexander, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Rutherford, Polk, Swain, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes and Yancey counties
(Vote for one. The top three vote recipients will serve three-year terms, 2009-11.)



Paula Green Carden

'84 AAS Southwestern Community College '03 BS '06 MPA
Sylva, N.C.

Director, Jackson County Department of Public Health

At WCU: Participated in symposiums hosted by Public Policy Institute and other PPI events; served on the Bio-Safety Committee and consulted with Emergency Preparedness Committees and Student Health Services.

Formerly: Red Cross volunteer; recipient of the Alexander-Salyer's Laboratorian of the Year Award for WNC.

Currently: Member, both the state and WNC Public Health associations; member, WNC Regional Health Directors Association and WNC Regional Preparedness Committee; chair-elect, Good Samaritan of Jackson County Board of Directors; member, Region A Partnership for Smart Start Board of Directors; member, Community Health Link-Healthy Carolinians of Jackson County Board of Directors; member, Community Health Access Network Advisory Committee; member, Vecino's (migrant farm workers health program) Board of Directors; recently appointed to the Legislative Study Commission for Children and Youth.



Gurney Chambers

'61 BSEd '63 MA '67 PhD Peabody College
Cullowhee, N.C.

Retired educator and administrator

At WCU: President of student body, 1960-61.

Formerly: Director, N.C. SACS Council on Accreditation and School Improvement, WCU; dean of the College of Education, WCU. While an employee of WCU from 1967-96, participated in numerous activities designed to further the growth and quality of the university; chairman, WCU's Committee on Athletics, 1970-75; Western's representative to the NCAA and Southern Conference, 1981-90; vice president (1983-85) and president (1985-87), Southern Conference; Patron Award recipient of the WCU Athletics Hall of Fame, 1998; WCU Academic and Professional Achievement Award recipient; WCU Honorary Doctorate recipient; chair, faculty/staff component of faculty gifts division in recent WCU fundraising campaign.

Currently: Dean emeritus, WCU College of Education and Allied Professions; member, WCU Catamount Club (formerly Big Cat Club) since its inception.



Marvin M. Cole

'58 BS '61 MA '66 EdD Indiana University
Candler, N.C.

Retired educator and administrator

At WCU: President of student body; student senate, SGA; sports editor, student newspaper and yearbook; manager, baseball team for Coach Jim Gudger; director, student union building; taught psychology of adjustment (orientation) for three years.

Formerly: Dean, Morehead State University, Kentucky; administrative officer, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan; adviser to president of Kabul University, Kabul, Afghanistan; president, DeKalb Council for the Arts, Atlanta; chairman of board, Literacy Council, Asheville; WCU Distinguished Alumnus Award recipient; president, Kiwanis Club, Atlanta.

Currently: President emeritus, Georgia Perimeter College (formerly DeKalb Community College); Mark Twain impersonator; Mark Twain educator for Elderhostel; member and teacher, Central Methodist Church in Asheville; president, Candler Lions Club; married to Mimi West Cole '58; three children.



Frank Leonard

'73 BSBA
Sylva, N.C.

Retired vice president of claims, Farm Bureau Insurance

At WCU: President, Pi Kappa Phi fraternity; graduated cum laude with management degree.

Formerly: Earned Association in Claims (AIC) and Chartered Property Casualty Underwriter (CPCU) designations; founding president, NCF Society of CPCU chapter; past president, Southeastern Claims Executive Association; past president, WCU Catamount Club; founding member, WCU College of Business Advisory Board.

Currently: Enjoys looking at the beautiful mountains every day with wife, Dianne.



J. Richard "Rich" Price

'88 BSBA
Whittier, N.C.

Director of casino marketing; Harrah's Cherokee Casino & Hotel

At WCU: President, Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity.

Formerly: Four-term member, WCU Catamount Club Board of Directors; two-term member, WCU Catamount Club Executive Board; Executive Management Program, North Carolina National Bank; Operations Management Program, Motion Industries Inc.

Currently: Director of VIP marketing and player development for Harrah's Cherokee Casino & Hotel; marketing adviser for Sequoyah National Golf Club.

NORTH CAROLINA DISTRICT 2

Alamance, Anson, Cabarrus, Caswell, Catawba, Cleveland, Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Gaston, Guilford, Iredell, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Randolph, Richmond, Rockingham, Rowan, Stanly, Stokes, Surry, Union and Yadkin counties
(Vote for one. The top two vote recipients will serve three-year terms, 2009-11.)



Gerald D. "Gerry" Austin

'64 BSEd '69 MAEd '77 EdD UNC-Greensboro
Summerfield, N.C.

Trainer and football official, NFL and Conference USA; self-employed, Austin Group — Leadership Training & Strategic Planning

At WCU: Student director, audio visual program; student assistant, basketball.

Formerly: Board of Directors, Greensboro Rotary Club; finance chairman, staff-parish chairman, administrative board, Oak Ridge UMC; WCU Academic and Professional Achievement Award recipient; member, Greensboro Economic Development Council;

member, United Way review committee.

Currently: Recipient of Art McNally Award; member, Greensboro Rotary; N.C. Sports Hall of Fame; WNC Sports Hall of Fame; N.C. High School Athletic Hall of Fame; member, WCU Catamount Club.



Chavis D. Gash

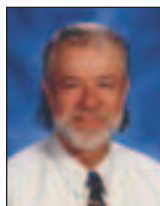
'04 BS
Shelby, N.C.

Coordinator, Communities in Schools of Cleveland County

At WCU: Host for the campus TV station; member, football team and intramural sports.

Formerly: Graduate, Cleveland County Chamber of Commerce Leadership Program.

Currently: Member, City of Shelby Community Relations Committee; member, YMCA First Tee Golf Program at Riverbend Golf Course; member, city of Shelby Weed and Seed Program/PTI subcommittee; member, Cleveland County 4-H/Cooperative Extension advisory committee; co-chair, Cleveland County Chamber of Commerce Leadership Program steering committee.



Clifton A. "Cliff" Pickett

'68 BS '76 MEd UNC-Greensboro '81 EdS ASU
Linwood, N.C.

Retired teacher and school administrator in Davidson County

At WCU: Member, WCU Marching Band 1964-67, trumpet; 1966, Pi Kappa Phi fraternity.

Formerly: WCU alumni adviser, Gamma Epsilon, 2001-03; member, Davidson County ARC, 1991-2000; board member, N.C. ARC, 1996-98; board member, Catamount Club, 2002-05.

Currently: Secretary and board member, Davidson County Day Reporting Center, 2000-present; member, N.C. Credit Union board, Lexington branch, 1996-99, 2005-present; vice chairperson, WCU Family Association, 2005-present; participant, WCU Alumni Band, 2002-present; married to Jan Parnell-Pickett; one son, Joseph Pickett '01 MHS '07.



J.B. Trotter Jr.

'70 BSBA

Thomasville, N.C.

President, Trotter's Sports & Marine Inc.

At WCU: Member, marching and concert bands; member, Pi Kappa Phi fraternity.

Formerly: Past president, WCU Catamount Club; member, N.C. Army National Guard; choir director and chairman of deacons, Oak Hill Memorial Baptist Church; past president, Thomasville Jaycees, 1982-83; past president, Silver Valley Civitan Club, 1987-89, 2003-04; past president, Silver Valley School PTA (two terms); advisory council, Silver Valley School (nine years); past president, South Davidson High School Booster's Club, 1991-92; life member, Thomasville Jaycees; life member, North Carolina JCI Senate; Tourism Commission, Davidson County, 2004-05; past president, Baptist Men's Organization, 2004-06; board of directors, Lexington State Bank, Thomasville, 1988-95; N.C. Dealer Council Representative, Outboard Marine Corp., 1995-2000; Charles Hutchins Memorial Award, N.C. Jaycees, 1983; Brown Finch Award and Keyman Award, Thomasville Jaycees, 1983; Governor of N.C. Volunteer of the Year Award, 1983; Civitan International Distinguished President Award; Civitan International Honor Club Award.

Currently: Married to Marie P. Trotter of Brevard; East Coast director of sales, Maurell Products Inc.; member, treasurer, Silver Valley Civitan Club; crew chief, recovery and assessor, N.C. Baptist Men Disaster Relief; ambassador, New Directions International.

Board of Directors Election 2009

NORTH CAROLINA DISTRICT 3

Bladen, Chatham, Columbus, Cumberland, Durham, Edgecombe, Franklin, Granville, Halifax, Harnett, Hoke, Johnston, Lee, Moore, Nash, Northampton, Orange, Person, Robeson, Sampson, Scotland, Vance, Wake, Warren and Wilson counties (Vote for one. The top vote recipient will serve a three-year term, 2009-11.)



John S. Martin
'90 BSBA

Raleigh, N.C.

Senior vice president, financial adviser, CAPTRUST

At WCU: Football, four-year starter, team captain 1985-89; member, Alpha Kappa Psi professional business fraternity.

Currently: Board member and fundraising chairman, Band Together (a Raleigh-based nonprofit that supports charities through music); member, Edenton Street United Methodist Church; married to Suzanne C. Martin; two children, Ian and Scotland.



William M. "Bill" Ross
'70 BA

Hillsborough, N.C.

Administrative manager, division of neurology, Duke University Medical Center
At WCU: President and vice president, Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity; Interfraternity Council; Young Republicans Club; Political Science Club; International Relations Club; intramurals.

Formerly: President, Zeta Xi House Corp., 1980-85; president, Eastern N.C. WCU Alumni Association, 1982-83; member, Alumni Association Board, 1985-86; president, Pi Kappa Alpha Alumni Association, 1980-84; deacon, treasurer and Stephen minister,

Trinity Avenue Presbyterian Church; member, Friendly North State Sertoma Club; secretary-treasurer, president and board chairman, Whitehall Investments; Meredith College Parent Board, 1994-96; established the Charles B. Ross Jr. Memorial Endowed Golf Scholarship at WCU; established the Robert L. Waters Memorial Scholarship for Coach Bob Waters at WCU.

Currently: Member, elder, finance committee member and personnel committee chairman, Trinity Avenue Presbyterian Church; board member, Whitehall Investments; member, WCU Catamount Club; married to Elaine Sluder Ross; two children, Laura and Charles; two grandchildren, Grace and Margaret.

NORTH CAROLINA DISTRICT 4

Beaufort, Bertie, Brunswick, Camden, Carteret, Chowan, Craven, Currituck, Dare, Duplin, Gates, Greene, Hertford, Hyde, Jones, Lenoir, Martin, New Hanover, Onslow, Pamlico, Pasquotank, Pender, Perquimans, Pitt, Tyrell, Washington and Wayne counties (Vote for one. The top vote recipient will serve a three-year term, 2009-11.)



Earl Crotts
'65 BSED '70 MAED '83 Eds

Southport, N.C.

Retired teacher and school administrator in Guilford County

At WCU: Lettered in baseball, 1961-1964.

Formerly: Member, WCU Alumni Board, 1970s and '90s; coach, American Legion Thoroughbred and Palomino baseball, 1966-88; president, Southport/Oak Island Kiwanis Club, 2002-03; Kiwanis lieutenant governor, Division 26, 2005-07; administrative board chair, Bessemer Methodist Church; member, NCHSAA realignment committee, 1987-92; member, N.C. Assessment Committee, 1983-86; member, town of St. James planning committee, 2004-05.

Currently: Member, Kiwanis Club, 1985-2007; administrative board chair, Trinity United Methodist Southport, 2004-07; mentor, South Brunswick Middle School, 2002-07; member, WCU Dugout Club; member, WCU Loyalty Fund, 1980s-present; member, WCU Catamount Club, 1970s-present; married to Julia Hall Crotts; two sons, Chuck and David '99.



Wayne Bowers

'69 BA '71 MA UNC-Chapel Hill '73 MPA USC-Columbia

Greenville, N.C.

Greenville city manager

At WCU: Alpha Phi Sigma honor society; history honor society; Outstanding Political Science Graduate 1969.

Formerly: Member (1985-88) and executive committee member (1987-88), Alumni Association board of directors; City manager, Jacksonville Beach, Fla., Huntington, W.Va., Spartanburg, S.C., and Gainesville, Fla.; president, North Florida Chapter, American Society for Public Administration; chairman, Carolinas Innovation Group; president-elect, South Carolina City and County Management Association; board of directors, Florida City and County Management Association; Salvation Army advisory board; USC/Clemson MPA advisory committee; University of Florida Honorary Bull Gator; graduate, Leadership Gainesville and Leadership Greenville.

Currently: Member, International City County Management Association; member, North Carolina City/County Management Association; member, Planning and Services Legislative Committee for North Carolina League of Municipalities; member, American Society for Public Administration; member, ECU Pirate Club; member, ECU MPA advisory council; member, UNC Alumni Association; member, Greenville Noon Rotary Club; member, North Carolina 911 Board; member, board of directors of Pitt County United Way and Pitt-Greenville Chamber of Commerce; married to Betsy Wofford Bowers '70; three children and two grandchildren.

OUT-OF-STATE DISTRICT 5

All states except North Carolina

(Vote for one. The top vote recipient will serve a three-year term, 2009-11.)



John C. Anderson
'67 BA '72 MAED

Chapin, S.C.

Retired school and district administrator in South Carolina

At WCU: Member, Marching Band; member, Concert Band; member, Jazz Band; member, Radio Club; member, Pi Kappa Alpha.

Formerly: President, S.C. School Administrators Association; president, S.C. High School League; president, S.C. Secondary Principals Association; president, S.C. Elementary Principals Association; president, Chapin Ruritan Club; chairman, Chapin/Irmo Relay for Life.

Currently: Deacon, Chapin Baptist Church, S.C.; vice president, Chapin Rotary Club; co-coordinator, Richland/Lexington Special Olympics; married to Carol Stanislawski '70; two sons.



Wardell Townsend

'75 BS '79 MSW West Virginia University

Silver Spring, Md.

Senior vice president, Compubahn Inc.

At WCU: Vice president, SGA; Student Senate, SGA; Psychology Club; residence hall assistant, Madison Hall.

Formerly: Assistant secretary for administration, USDA, Washington, D.C., 1993-97; Chief of staff to U.S. Rep. Mike Espy (D-Miss.), 1987-93; senior adviser, presidential transition, Clinton campaign, 1992-93; projects director for U.S. Reps. Jamie Clarke (D-N.C.) and Doug Applegate (D-Ohio), 1983-87; Cherokee business development officer, Asheville; community development director, Henderson County, 1980-82; treasurer, University of the District of Columbia Foundation, 2001-03.

Currently: President, National Capital Region Western Carolina Club; chairman of the board, the Faith and Politics Institute, Washington, and Academy of Certified Social Workers, 1982-present; member, diocesan investment committee, Episcopal Diocese of Washington, 1994-present; member, Japanese-American Citizens League; member, Okinawa Kai; member, NAACP; 25-year member, Ascension Church, Silver Spring; married to Diane Martin of Asheville; four children.



SILVER MEDAL SILVER ANNIVERSARY

Twenty-five Years Ago, Western Carolina's Cardiac Catamounts
Were Knocking on the Door of a National Championship

By TYLER NORRIS GOODE

Long before dreams of a national title came clearly into focus in 1983, Western Carolina was 0-2 and down 10 points late in a home game against East Tennessee State. Months before the Catamounts carried Coach Bob Waters off the field that would one day be named after him, WCU quarterback **Willie Perkins '88** took a few steps back and launched a pass he would later describe as a prayer. An ETSU defender stepped in front of WCU receiver **Eric Rasheed**, plucked the ball from the sky and fell backward.

caught it in the end zone. The unlikely touchdown breathed new life into the Catamounts, who went on to notch a 17-16 victory to begin a 12-game unbeaten streak that would not end until WCU became the first Southern Conference team to make the NCAA's Division I-AA (now FCS) national championship game.

Jeff Gilbert '85, who was the Cats' starting quarterback for most of the 1983 season, watched Perkins' throw and Rasheed's miracle grab from the sideline. "I think it built confidence throughout the season that we were never out of a game," Gilbert said. "We were confident in the preseason that we had something. We believed in each other. That play showed us to never give up."

The acrobatic catch was only the beginning of the wild ride that ultimately led to the Catamounts' only FCS playoff berth. Three weeks later, WCU had a fourth-quarter, 10-point lead over defending league champion Furman. But the Paladins came back and forced a tie, which would later allow Furman to wrestle the SoCon title and automatic NCAA bid away from the Catamounts.

"At that time, the Southern Conference was not a round-robin," recalled White, now the school's official athletic historian and director of the Cats' W Club, which hosted in the fall a 25th anniversary celebration of the '83 squad's historic run to the title game. "We did not play VMI that year, and Furman did, so they had one more game than us. Going into our last game, we not only needed to beat Appalachian, but two other teams had to lose (Northeastern Louisiana, now Louisiana-Monroe; and Middle Tennessee) for us to have a chance." All three came together: WCU whipped Appalachian, 41-15, and Northeast Louisiana and Middle Tennessee lost their games.

Once in the postseason, the Cats would call upon the resolve that helped them pull off the unlikely comeback against East Tennessee two months earlier. In the opening round against Colgate, WCU fell into a 23-0 hole in the first half before coming back to earn a 24-23 win in Cullowhee. The following week, the Cats trailed Holy Cross by a 21-14



Members of the 1983 football squad returned to campus recently (top, right) to celebrate the 25th anniversary of their national title game appearance, under the guidance of legendary Coach Bob Waters (above).

High above in Whitmire Stadium's press box, WCU sports information director **Steve White '67** winced. Less than three minutes remained on the clock, and the interception would surely spell defeat for the Catamounts in their Southern Conference opener.

But as the defender fell backward, the ball popped out and bounced off his leg. Rasheed dove toward the free ball and



score when WCU's **Tiger Greene** blocked a punt. **Clyde Simmons '96** picked the ball up and hustled 60 yards for a touchdown to tie the game that WCU went on to win, 28-21.

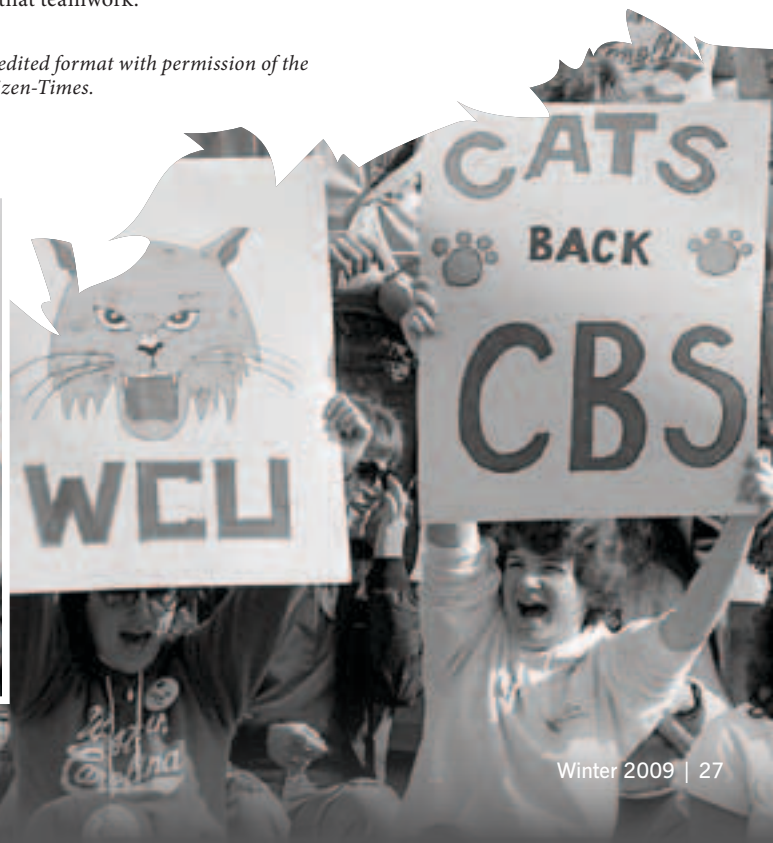
Then came the rematch with Furman, a team the Cats had not defeated since joining the SoCon in 1976. The Paladins took a 7-6 lead in the third quarter, but WCU came back to earn a 14-7 victory and a berth in the title game. That would prove to be the high-water mark for WCU. Southern Illinois crushed the Cats, 43-7, for the championship in Charleston, S.C.

A quarter-century later, though, Gilbert and his former teammates said what sticks out most are the wins during their remarkable run. "Those were some of the best days of my life," said Gilbert, who now lives in Greensboro.

Two members of the team were named All-Americans (Greene and Rasheed), and six went on to play in the NFL – defensive end Simmons (Eagles, Cardinals, Jaguars, Bengals, Bears), defensive backs Greene (Falcons, Packers) and **Fred Davis '88** (Seahawks), linebacker **Louis Cooper '87** (Chiefs, Dolphins, Eagles), kicker **Dean Biasucci '88** (Colts, Rams) and running back **Leonard Williams** (Bills).

More than any single individual's contributions, though, receiver **Kristy Kiser '84** said the aspect of the team that sticks out to him is the bond the Catamounts formed before they became a national finalist. "The first part of the season, it's not like we had a bunch of All-Americans walking on the field," said Kiser. "We had some good players, but we came together and started to gel as a team. When that happened, individual recognitions followed. We were a team first, and then there was individual success that came out of that teamwork."

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GOAL TENDING

After Winning Their Second Conference Soccer Tournament, Western's Women Look to Take the Next Step in 2009

By JUSTIN GLOVER

The Western Carolina women's soccer team battled 110 minutes of scoreless play before finishing off top-seeded University of North Carolina at Greensboro on penalty kicks, 2-0, to win the Southern Conference Tournament Championship in November. With the win, WCU soccer earned its second tournament championship – and the automatic bid to the NCAA tourney that goes along with it.

"I'm at a loss for words, just filled with emotion of the victory," said Head Coach Tammy DeCesare, who also guided the team to its 2005 tournament championship. "To be able to get a win over the caliber of program of UNC-G is a testament to the hard work of our players and the level of where our program is going. To be considered one of the elite teams in the country is very important for this program and our players."

WCU sophomore goalkeeper Caitlin Williams, who was named SoCon tournament most valuable player, made four

huge saves to keep UNC-G off the board in the shootout. The Liberty, S.C., native stonewalled four Spartan shooters, including league Player of the Year Katelynn Donovan, to lift Western to the victory.

Williams, along with three other Catamounts, made the All-Tournament Team. Senior defender Arlan Whittle earned her second career all-tourney team honor and was joined by fellow defender Jenny Matteson, a junior, and junior midfielder Shanna Schmoker.

Although Western Carolina would go on to lose in the first round of the NCAA tournament to eventual national champion the

The women's soccer team celebrates its conference championship (left and right), a victory sealed by goalkeeper Caitlin Williams, tournament MVP (center).





University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the taste of success has the Catamounts hungry for more in 2009. "Having the opportunity to compete in this year's NCAA tournament – against the apparent 'best' team in the country – is the direction this program is growing," said DeCesare. "UNC is undoubtedly one of the most revered teams in the college game, and our game against them was an experience that will allow our players to understand what becoming the 'next level' really means. We were able to compete against the top team in the country in 2008. Our goal for 2009 is to get one step closer and beat that caliber of opponent on a more consistent basis." The Catamounts upset No. 20-ranked South Carolina in September for its first win over a nationally ranked squad.



RIDE ON

The Catamount Caravan Will Be Hitting the Road this Spring

To borrow a phrase from "Smokey and the Bandit," it will be eastbound and down, loaded up and truckin' for Western Carolina athletics this spring as the Catamount Club launches a new endeavor, the Catamount Spring Caravan.

Consisting of eight stops in North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia beginning in March and continuing through May, the caravan will feature an entertaining program, a new video presentation about Western Carolina athletics and an array of door prizes.

"The Catamount Caravan will be a great chance for donors and fans to visit with our coaches, enjoy some good food and get the inside scoop on Catamount athletics," said Brian Frerking, assistant athletic director for development. "We look forward to seeing Catamount fans across the Southeast this spring."

Western Carolina legend **Steve White '67**, director of the W Club, will serve as master of ceremonies for the events, to be headlined by head coaches Dennis Wagner (football), Larry Hunter (men's basketball) and Kellie Harper (women's basketball). Chip Smith, director of athletics, will deliver an update on the state of Catamount athletics. Other head coaches along for the ride to provide insight from the locker

rooms will be Bobby Moranda (baseball), Tammy DeCesare (women's soccer), **Gorham Bradley '04** (men's golf) and **Danny Williamson '84 MAEd '86** (men and women's track and field).

THE 2009 CATAMOUNT SPRING CARAVAN LINEUP

DATE	CITY	LOCATION	COST
March 17	Cullowhee	Ramsey Center	\$15
March 24	Waynesville	Waynesville Country Club	\$20
April 27	Asheville	Broadmoor Golf Links	\$20
April 28	Morganton	Mimosa Hills Golf Club	\$20
April 29	Kernersville	Out West Steakhouse	\$20
May 11	Charlotte	Olde Sycamore Golf Plantation	\$25
May 13	Atlanta, Ga.	Roswell River Landing	\$20
May 19	Greenville, S.C.	Verdae Greens Golf Club	\$25

All events begin at 6:30 p.m.



For more information on how to register for the Catamount Caravan, visit www.catamountsports.cstv.com or contact the Catamount Club at (828) 227-3047.

ECONOMIC ENGI

Fostering economic development in the Western North Carolina mountains has been an important part of Western Carolina's mission for years. That task moved to the forefront in 2000, when voters across the state overwhelmingly approved a \$3.1 billion higher education bond issue that provided \$98.4 million for construction and renovation projects at WCU. University leaders pledged then to use Western Carolina's resources as an economic engine for the region and state. Business assistance programs offered by university entities such as the Center for Rapid Product Realization and the Small Business and Technology Development Center are part of that effort. Two recent success stories are highlighted here.

PAINT BY NUMBERS

A Brother-and-Sister Entrepreneurship Team Wins 'Small Business of the Year' Honors

By CLARK FIELDS

Six years ago, brother and sister team **David Van Zee '95** and Wendy Banks created Carolina Management Team, an Enka-based company that specializes in painting and protective coatings. But CMT is no ordinary painting company, as evidenced by the fact that the U.S. Small Business Administration recently recognized Van Zee and Banks as North Carolina's Small Business Persons of the Year.

"I like to tell people that we paint the sewers," said Banks. More precisely, CMT has carved a specialized niche of painting and applying protective coatings to municipal water treatment facilities. As unglamorous as it sounds, "painting the sewers" has brought the company impressive growth, an opportunity to partner with painting giant Sherwin-Williams, and a reputation for exceeding customer expectations.

CMT's sales grew from \$200,000 its first year of operations to more than \$1 million last year. Banks and Van Zee have expanded the business to cover the entire state, with offices in Asheville and Winston-Salem. Its clientele list includes the cities of Asheville, Burlington, Charlotte, Raleigh and Winston-Salem, and the towns of Cary, Pittsboro and

Robbinsville, as well as manufacturing firms Sara Lee and Silver-Line Plastics of Asheville.

"Western Carolina University has played a big part in the success of CMT," said Van Zee. "Our company has continued to grow and expand with support from the university and its Small Business and Technology Development Center." The SBTDC, a business development service of the College of Business, has worked with the company since its founding. SBTDC staff Annice Brown and Mark Mills helped to provide the company with the tools it needed to plan for the future, respond to changes in the marketplace and develop a sound financial underpinning for a successful business.

Mills, a counselor with the SBTDC's Procurement Technical Assistance Center, provided Van Zee and Banks with guidance through the daunting process of bidding on government contracts. "I hear his words in my head all the time: 'Target your market. Don't use a shotgun approach,'" Banks said. "Those words have kept us focused on municipal water and wastewater facilities and our goal of becoming the painting contractor of choice for plant superintendents in North Carolina."

CMT's rapid expansion produced growing pains for the company. "Our business was expanding so rapidly and being pulled in so many different directions that we needed to take a critical look at our company and make sure our focus and operations were in line with our mission," said Van Zee. The SBTDC stepped in and facilitated a strategic management retreat that allowed the company to emerge with a clear vision and action plan to reach its goals, he said. "The process was so valuable that we have a retreat every year. We credit a lot of our success to the support we received from WCU's SBTDC," Van Zee said.



Wendy Banks and David Van Zee '95 accept awards from the U.S. Small Business Administration.



NEERS



POPLAR SCIENCE

WCU's Rapid Center Provides Prototypes to Help Launch a Siding Business in Canton

By LEILA TVEDT

The next time you see distinctive wood siding on a building, think about entrepreneur Danny Heatherly and his link with Western Carolina. Heatherly harvests strips of bark from tulip poplar trees for drying in the kilns of his Canton-based company, Timberclad. The flat, dried bark makes fine siding, but is expensive to produce one tree at a time. That's why Heatherly came to WCU's Center for Rapid Product Realization to develop comparable cladding from lower cost, artificial materials.

"We scanned the tree bark and replicated every detail," said Phil Sanger, director of the Rapid Center in WCU's Kimmel School of Construction Management and Technology. The problem is the result was too exact. "Our rapid prototyping equipment is so precise that it had difficulty with all the details. We backed off a bit, created a sample in plastic, and then spray-painted it to simulate the colors of real tree bark," Sanger said.

Heatherly was delighted. "I was tickled to work with them," he said. Now he has a Wisconsin company using the mold created at WCU to cast his new product out of recycled plastic. Heatherly calls it EcoBark. "Once I get this thing on the market, it's going to go worldwide," he predicted, "and we can say it was developed right here in Western North Carolina." Heatherly knows he's taking a risk launching a new product during an economic downturn. "I'm going to push forward 'til I get it done," he said.

Assisting a determined entrepreneur is just one example of the Rapid Center's work. It also worked with Hickory-based US Conec to design prototypes for connectors that link fibers smaller than the width of a human hair; helped Morganton's Elk Products, a major U.S. manufacturer of home-security systems, test a complex part without the upfront costs and risks associated with traditional tooling processes; and teamed up with Caterpillar construction-

equipment company in Franklin to create an inexpensive gauge used in dirty job-site conditions that shorten the operating life of a more costly part. Overall, the center has provided technical assistance to more than 100 companies, organizations and entrepreneurs over the last three years.

It was that kind of success that brought Robert McMahan to WCU as dean of the Kimmel School after serving as science and technology adviser to the governor, Legislature and the North Carolina Department of Commerce. "The Rapid Center is beautifully positioned to bridge the academy and the economy," McMahan said. "We're building relationships that give companies access to our extensive resources and to the professional expertise of our faculty, who have years of experience in industry. And together, through our students' involvement in these complex projects, we are helping to prepare the next-generation work force."



Danny Heatherly (top) shows off his artificial poplar siding, created with equipment in WCU's Center for Rapid Product Realization (above).



For more information on WCU's Center for Rapid Production Realization, visit <http://rapid.wcu.edu>.



Brank Proffitt '42 and Juanita Proffitt '39 support WCU from their Madison County home.

“Think what life would have been for Brank and me if Western hadn’t been here. I would do anything that I could to promote this university.”

—Juanita Proffitt '39

alumni ACHIEVEMENTS

PROFFITT SHARING

A Couple's Grateful Spirit Sparks a Lifetime of Service to WCU

By TERESA KILLIAN

Around a table at a house built in just the right spot to capture the morning sunshine in a Madison County valley, **Juanita Proffitt '39** offered a prayer of thanksgiving for family, friends, food and fun, and for Western Carolina. She prayed that the university, despite economically uncertain times, would continue to serve, grow and bloom. She and husband **Brank Proffitt '42** know it is possible: They are the evidence. Children of the Great Depression, the Proffitts credit the generosity of many and the opportunities at Western Carolina for transforming their lives.

"It has really been a long, hard road, but I've enjoyed every minute of it," said Juanita Proffitt in accepting the Distinguished Service Award during 2008 Homecoming festivities.

When she enrolled at Western Carolina Teachers College as Juanita Farmer, she had \$6 – not enough for a semester's tuition and expenses for a day student. The aunt with whom she lived in Cullowhee had recently died, and the money from selling the family farm was lost when the banks failed. "There really was no money," said Juanita Proffitt, who remembered how her aunt would sell eggs and butter to a Sylva restaurant to buy groceries such as sugar or a can of salmon. "When I came to Western, they gave me a job. It was just so wonderful to get my diploma in 1939 so that I could help my sisters and my mother."

Meanwhile, Brank Proffitt was grateful for those who invited him for a meal and offered a place to sleep, even if it was just a bed on a closed-in porch, to make it easier to attend Mars Hill College. He mastered the art of hitchhiking – dressing nicely and timing when to stick out his thumb – to travel 15 miles to class and worked summers at a farm to afford his education.

"I was just as poor as I could be moneywise, and I did what I had to do to go to school at all back then," said Brank Proffitt. After enrolling at Western Carolina, he took a job with Professor Carl Killian helping coordinate a program that enabled schools in the region to pool their resources to expand audiovisual education. Educational films and equipment would be loaded in vehicles, including Killian's

"big, long Buick" and taken to participating schools. "In schools that used those tools, children were doing better, and we signed on more and more schools," said Proffitt. "The job was a lifesaver for me."

Both Proffitts earned degrees from Western Carolina that allowed them to land jobs in the field of education. They went on to earn higher degrees – he a master's degree from Peabody College and a doctorate from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and she a master's degree from UNC-CH. They met as teachers at Sylva High School. She devoted her career to teaching in North Carolina schools. He was a teacher, administrator, superintendent of various school systems and, at one time, director of the McKee Laboratory School that was on Western Carolina's campus.

"Think what life would have been for Brank and me if Western hadn't been here. I would do anything that I could to promote this university," said Juanita Proffitt. She already has achieved much for her alma mater. For decades, the Proffitts have regularly driven more than an hour to attend university events and meetings of all kinds. Juanita Proffitt currently serves on the WCU Alumni Association board of directors. In addition, she honored her husband's many contributions in the field of education by endowing an annual scholarship fund at WCU to help students who have financial need. "We are so sympathetic to those students who are capable but don't have money," said Juanita Proffitt.

David Andrew '83, president of the WCU Alumni Association, described the couple's dedication to Western Carolina as contagious and inspiring. Indeed, their son, **John Proffitt '94**, established his own endowed scholarship fund for computer science students at WCU when, as a student, he saw the need. "I was guided in that effort by the example of my mother," he said.

Chancellor John W. Bardo said the Proffitts are among Western Carolina's best. "They have supported this institution for their entire lives," said Bardo. "Thank you for all that you have done and continue to do to make a difference for the university."



BASE HIT

Baseball Alum's Single Lands on the Country Music Charts

By TERESA KILLIAN

Sylva native **Matt Stillwell '98** used to have diamonds in his eyes – baseball diamonds that is. But as his WCU graduation approached, the all-conference baseball player started to see stars – country music stars – instead. So Stillwell traded stealing bases with his speed for stealing hearts with his music and moved to Nashville. Now with the title-track single from his recently released album “Shine” making a splash on the country music charts, Stillwell is aglow in the spotlight.

“Sometimes you have to dig a little bit deeper than the major labels and mainstream radio to find a great, new country artist and that is exactly what the case is with Matt Stillwell,” said a review published in November in Today’s Country magazine.

In “Shine,” Stillwell sings about Hank Williams Jr. on the radio, “shine” from a Mason jar, dancing by firelight, partying in a field and the Carolina sun. He made a video for the song last year against the backdrop of the mountains and lake at Fontana Village Resort during the inaugural Stillwell Shine Fest.

“The location was perfect for a song inspired from those same mountains,” said Stillwell, who already has Stillwell Shine Fest '09 on his calendar for Friday, June 19, and Saturday, June 20. “Going home is always special to me. Seeing everyone I grew up with, my family and the people I went to church with refreshes me and keeps everything in perspective. This entire area always has been extremely supportive of me, whether it was playing baseball or singing, so it holds the most special place in my heart.”

At Smoky Mountain High School, Stillwell participated not only in football, basketball, track and baseball, but also in chorus and school productions. He continued to play music for fun while a student-athlete at Western Carolina. After deciding to pursue a music career, he crafted a regimented practice schedule and began performing at venues in Sylva, Asheville, Charlotte, Raleigh and Chapel Hill; Knoxville, Tenn.; and Atlanta and Statesboro, Ga. He created his own label, Still 7 Records, on which he released “Take It All In” in 2006 and “Shine” in 2008.

“Having my own label and having the opportunity to launch my new project on a major scale is due in large part to the experiences and relationships I have from Western – the work ethic, the discipline and knowing how to win from baseball, and the overall business knowledge and creative writing from the academic side,” said Stillwell. “I also learned how to have a good time and make other people have a good time, and that drives my live shows.”

The album “Shine” features the songs of country artist Matt Stillwell '98.



Read more at
www.mattstillwell.net.



THE 1ST ANNUAL "Ride for the Cause"



**KNIGHTS
for HOPE**

Fight the Fight for our Women
May 3, 2008

RIDE WITH A REASON

WCU Alumni Honor the Memory of a Motorcycle-Loving Cancer Victim

By BESSIE DIETRICH GOGGINS '06

Robert David Clement '73 and **Eileen Leatherwood '97** revved up their engines last May for the inaugural Ride for the Cause, a memorial motorcycle ride to honor **Alice Woodard Clement '75**, Clement's wife and Leatherwood's sister, who passed away in August 2007 after being diagnosed with ovarian cancer in November 2004.

"Alice was a wonderful person," said Leatherwood. "During Alice's three years after being diagnosed, she worked in Haywood County schools, helped raise our nieces and planned family functions."

Alice Clement never gave up or gave in. "We had planned to build our dream house in Maggie Valley, and Alice had folders of pictures and plans," said Clement. "She knew exactly what we wanted, so in April of 2006, construction began. On Feb. 23, 2007, we moved into our new home."

When she first started having symptoms of cancer, doctors dismissed them as signs of menopause. By the time she was referred to Hope – A Women's Cancer Center, the cancer had spread. Hope is where she received her chemotherapy treatments. And that is where the idea for Ride for the Cause sprouted. With family support, Clement and Leatherwood decided to help two nonprofit organizations affiliated with the clinic – The Hope Chest for Women and Hands of Faith – in appreciation for the support received during their loved one's fight.

Pairing it with a memorial ride fit perfectly. "Alice and I shared the passion of riding. She enjoyed the freedom as much – if not more – than I did," said Clement. "We toured

the Blue Ridge Parkway twice and Colorado. For our 25th anniversary, we toured Wyoming and Montana before turning around in Canada. She continued to ride and keep her spirits high even after the cancer was diagnosed."

But Alice never wanted her own motorcycle. "From lesson plans to interior design, Alice always said she did her best thinking on the back of their BMW. She rode, thought and enjoyed the scenery," said Leatherwood.

The inaugural Ride for the Cause began in Asheville and ended in Maggie Valley, a route covering 66 miles. "We raised about \$3,500 after expenses, which we think is very good, considering the weather and competing with other events," said Kathy Haney, executive director of The Hope Chest for Women. "The Clement family organized the event with great passion and success, and they are to be commended for making the ride happen. Thanks to them, the Hope Chest was able to assist additional women." The second annual Ride for the Cause is set for Saturday, May 9.

The ride has succeeded at honoring Alice. "I felt a tug at my heart when I saw David folding the specifically designed Ride for the Cause T-shirt," said Haney. "He put the shirt under Alice's helmet and placed both on the backseat of his bike during the ride."



For more information, e-mail
bahaclement@yahoo.com or
khaney@hopeawcc.com.

Robert David Clement '73 (bottom, left) helped organize a fundraising motorcycle ride in memory of his wife, Alice Woodard Clement '75 (above).



Photos courtesy of Stephanie Rayburn

FOREST GUMPTION

Environmental Health Grad Works in Africa to Help Save the Planet, One Tree at a Time

By BESSIE DIETRICH GOGGINS '06

When **Stephanie Rayburn '06** joined the Peace Corps upon graduation, she never thought she would live in a one-room mud hut in the Republic of The Gambia, haul water on her head or eat rice with spicy peanut butter sauce every day. A full-time volunteer in the small country in western Africa, Rayburn helps villagers learn about their environment and how they can maintain healthy forests and soil.

Her adventure started when she saw a Peace Corps advertisement announcing that a recruiter would be at WCU. "I met with him and got excited," said Rayburn. "I chose the Africa region, and I was most qualified for the environment sector because of my educational background."

Although nothing quite prepared Rayburn for the differences between her homeland and The Gambia, she said her degree in environmental health piqued

her passion for environmental stewardship. "A knowledge of soils, air and water was nice to have as I learned about the issues they face, such as erosion, desertification and sediment pollution," she said.

Burton Ogle, associate professor in WCU's environmental health program, said that, as a student, Rayburn was more concerned with making a difference than making a large

salary. "When she and I discussed the possibility of her entering the Peace Corps, I knew it was perfect for her," Ogle said. "She always was upset to learn about global disparities in public health and basic human needs. She was concerned most with achieving a position where she could do the most good."

Rayburn spent most of her second year in The Gambia working with Trees for Fuel, a reforestation pilot program that will resume next year with more funding. "The goals were to teach several villages about deforestation and its consequences, and then to show them how to create and maintain tree nurseries, and plant trees for firewood and for soil improvement," she said. "It sounds simple, but the culture here is very resistant to new ideas. Many had a hard time imagining themselves as caretakers of their forests and had trouble organizing around a single project because they traditionally work individually."

Rayburn said she is enjoying her experiences abroad. "I had to alter my grandiose ideas about saving the planet and settle for working little by little on small projects," she said. "One of the big sayings here is 'slowly, slowly,' and that applies to all aspects of life, especially work. The cultural exchange between Gambians and Americans has been incredibly beneficial for all of us. I can see changes happening here because of our work, and also changes in all the volunteers as a result of our time here."



Stephanie Rayburn '06 is working with the Peace Corps.

ONE WORLD

A Pfizer Sales Executive Helps Provide Low-Cost Medicine in South Africa

By JILL INGRAM MA '08

When family and friends speak of **Barry Smith '67**, one word commonly finds its way into conversation: determined. "The number one thing that's probably gotten him to where he is now is his pure determination and hard work," said Eric Smith, Barry's son.

Yet in recalling his achievements from a three-decade career with Pfizer, the world's largest research-based biomedical and pharmaceutical company, Barry Smith had praise only for his employees. "They're such wonderful, caring people," Smith said of his employees while general manager in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean. Of the years Smith spent in South Africa, as regional director with more than 800 employees in 10 countries, Smith said, "I had such an outstanding team."

His time in South Africa produced Smith's proudest career achievement, the Diflucan Partnership Program, an agreement he helped create between Pfizer, Southern African governments, nonprofits and nongovernmental organizations that provided low-cost treatment for AIDS-related infections. "It was the first public-private partnership in Southern Africa of which I was aware," Smith said.

Hank McCrorie, a former Pfizer executive who worked with Smith from the earliest stages of Smith's career, said Smith's leadership and management skills stand out.

"He was able to develop people who could grow into Pfizer management positions," McCrorie said. In fact, four members of Smith's eight-person management team in Southern Africa were promoted to Pfizer headquarters.

Again happy to share credit, Smith also stressed that the commitment of his wife, **Patricia Cantrell Smith '68**, to raising their two young children allowed him to work 70-hour weeks early in his career. "I would never have accomplished half of what I did without her," he said.

In October, WCU's Alumni Association presented its Professional Achievement Award to Smith, whose family Catamount connections run deep. Barry and Pat Smith met at Western Carolina, and the list of family alums include Pat's brother-in-law **Greg Caudle '71**, Barry's sister **Kitty Smith Saunders '66** and Kitty's husband, **Dwight Gordon Saunders '65**.

Smith's parents, Bill and Betty Smith, did not attend college, but they always stressed education. "In our family, from first grade on, grades were very important," Smith said.



The couple's home in Cramerton puts them close to Eric, who lives in Charlotte with his wife, Stephanie Moeller Smith, and their two children; and daughter Heather Smith, who lives in Hickory and has her own career with Pfizer.

Since Smith left Pfizer in 2002, he and Pat have traveled extensively, making trips to Venice, Italy, and Yosemite National Park. He is a member of WCU's College of Business board of advisers and his local Rotary chapter, president-elect of the Heart Society of Gaston County and involved with St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Gastonia.

Smith took from his career a lesson that continues to serve him well. "The more you work with people," Smith said, "you realize that no matter where they are in the world, people have more in common than uncommon in their aspirations for themselves and their children."



Barry Smith '67 and Dr. Mantombazana "Manto" Tshabalala-Msimang, South Africa's former minister of health, sign a memorandum of understanding to provide low-cost treatment for AIDS-related infections in December 2000.

Photo courtesy of Pfizer Inc.

SPIDER, MAN

A WCU-Trained Arachnid Expert Appears on a Popular Late-Night TV Talk Show

By JOHN KENYON

"Tonight my new spider will be on the show – I will celebrate from a distance," said late-night talk show host Stephen Colbert to open his Comedy Central television program minutes before **Jason Bond '93** joined him on the set. Bond, an East Carolina University biologist who studies trapdoor spiders, made international headlines recently when he named a new species after Colbert. He appeared on the "The Colbert Report" to help introduce the newly named arachnid, "Aptostichus stephencolberti."

Colbert asked for a spider to be named after him upon hearing that Bond had christened one "Myrmekiaphila neilyoungi" in honor of legendary rock singer Neil Young. "Where's my spider?" Colbert said on his show. "I have lots of animals named after me: turtles, eagles, Ontario Junior League hockey mascots. The world demands an eight-legged tribute to Stephen Colbert."

An affable Bond agreed to Colbert's request.

"Stephen called me directly and was very conversational," said Bond. "He told me he always talks with his guests on what to expect on the show." Bond gave Colbert his choice among 27 newly

discovered species of spiders, and Colbert narrowed it down to three finalists. On the program, Colbert chose his spider, which lives in the sandy dunes of the California coast, through a competition reminiscent of "The Dating Game" called "Spida of Love."

Although appearing on late-night TV can be exciting, Bond saw it as a chance to talk about spiders and what they contribute to our ecosystem. "At WCU, the importance of biodiversity and our role as humans was instilled in me," he said. "This was a great opportunity to talk about that."

Bond credits much of his success as a scientist to WCU's department of biology and its extensive undergraduate thesis program. "WCU had an incredibly strong group of individuals – a world-class set of faculty. I am amazed even today when I look at my old notes, at the insight that they had," he said. "It also was amazing that many of my classmates went on to get their doctorates and are working in academia."

Bond's interest in trapdoor spiders was evident even when he was an undergraduate, said Frederick Coyle, retired WCU biology professor. "As an undergraduate, he



Jason Bond '93 shows off an eight-legged friend named after Stephen Colbert.



Photos courtesy of East Carolina University News Services

went on a 10-day trip in the rain forest as part of a course on tropical biodiversity, a study of how and why there are so many different species in the tropics," said Coyle. "We published a paper together on trapdoor spiders based on our studies in Costa Rica."

Bond received \$750,000 in grants from the National Science Foundation in 2005 and 2006 to classify the trapdoor spider species and contribute to the NSF Tree of Life project. He is both a spider systematist, or someone who studies organisms and how they are classified, and a taxonomist, or someone who classifies new species. "He is one of the most prolific researchers in evolutionary biology," said Coyle. "The results of his research are widely read and admired. He's broken a lot of new ground."



Images from the pictorial history book "Sylva" include (clockwise, from top left) a cover photo showing employees lining up in front of the old Sylva Laundry in 1950; a downtown scene in 1895, before Sylva became Jackson County's seat; the McGuire family, the town's "first family" of dentistry; and the Commercial Hotel, which was destroyed by fire in 1923. Below, "Sylva" author Lynn Gaines Hotaling '72 MAEd '80 signs copies of the pictorial history along with Hattie Hilda Sutton Allison '41 (center) and Dorris Dills Beck '55 MA '72 (left.)

PHOTO JOURNALISM

Newspaper Editor Authors a Pictorial History, with Help from Some Friends

By RANDALL HOLCOMBE

When "Sylva," a pictorial history book about Jackson County's seat, was released last September, author **Lynn Gaines Hotaling '72 MAEd '80** thanked many people for helping create the volume. Among them were former professors at Western Carolina, even though they had no direct hand in the book's production. "When I got to Western in 1970, I wasn't really sure what I wanted to study," Hotaling said. "I started out in sociology, but then I dropped all those courses and added history classes. Fortunately, I ended up in courses taught by Cliff Lovin, Max Williams, Gerry Schwartz, John Bell, Brian Walton and Alice Mathews. That's when my interest in history came to life."

The Georgia native went on to earn a bachelor's degree in history, later picking up her graduate degree in biology education. She joined The Sylva Herald newspaper in 1984 and became editor five years ago. The inspiration to produce a book about Sylva came in 2006, after Hotaling interviewed two WCU alumnae who grew up in town and have remained friends for more than eight decades: Rachel Brown Phillips, who attended WCU in 1937, and **Hattie Hilda Sutton Allison '41**. "They've known each other since nursery school at First Baptist Church and have so many stories about when they were girls in Sylva and the fun they had," Hotaling said. "I wanted to create something to preserve the Sylva they remember."

Hotaling got together with Phillips, Allison and Sylva resident **Dorris Dills Beck '55 MA '72** to go through the

women's photo collections and scrapbooks. She also picked out vintage pictures from the Herald's files and from the Special Collections office at WCU's Hunter Library. Other photos were contributed by Herald readers. **George Frizzell '77 MA '81**, head of Special Collections, was particularly helpful, Hotaling said. "George allowed us to use photos and shared his expertise," she said. "He was never too busy to help me track down a missing fact."

Hotaling also credited Herald Publisher Steve Gray, who allowed use of the newspaper's photos and provided some from his own collection, and the paper's photo editor, Nick Breedlove, who scanned all the photos readers brought in and created digital files. Breedlove attended WCU from 2001 to 2003.

Proceeds from sales of "Sylva" will benefit the Jackson County Genealogical Society. Part of Arcadia Publishing's "Images of America" series, the book sells for \$19.99.



Joe Sims '97, sporting a Western Carolina shirt, gets a moment of fame on the video scoreboard during the Catamounts' 2008 football game at Florida State.



classNOTES

1963

Mel Gibson MAEd '67 and wife **Joanne Gibson MAEd '67** participated in the North Carolina Senior Games in September in Raleigh, competing in the 65-69 age categories. Joanne Gibson earned a silver medal in the standing long jump, and Mel Gibson won gold medals in the standing long jump and basketball shooting, and a silver medal in the running long jump.



Photo by G. Nelson

1972

In October, **Nathan E. "Lanny" McMinn MBA '78** was awarded the Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award at the University of Montevallo. McMinn is an assistant professor in the Michael E. Stephens College of Business at Montevallo, just south of Birmingham, Ala. McMinn has taught classes in management, marketing and management information systems. He is "resident computer guru on campus and is informally consulted almost daily by students, professors and professional staff about hardware and software problems," said one colleague. A former student, in a letter supporting the award nomination,



wrote, "Professor McMinn exemplifies what I believe are the best characteristics of the University of Montevallo – namely, genuine compassion, real relationships and a desire to give students the very best education possible." McMinn also is active in the local community, having served as president of the emergency assistance board of directors, member of the Relay for Life planning committee and adult Sunday school teacher.

1975

Randy Price MAEd '76 is new director of Burke County Emergency Services. Previously, Price coordinated emergency medical services in the education department at Catawba Valley Community College. He has spent his career in emergency services, and as a Western Carolina student helped implement the student-run EMS program, which is still in operation today.

1977

Marty Bowie MAEd is a guidance counselor with the Department of the Navy in Norfolk, Va. Bowie gives educational briefs, prepares education plans for deploying Navy ships and individually counsels sailors. A language enthusiast, he studies French and Spanish. Recently, at the age of 63, Bowie began karate classes.



1978

Beth Tyson Lofquist MAEd '79 EDS '88 became Western Carolina's associate provost in September. The new title reflects Lofquist's increasing responsibility within the Office of the Provost, which oversees academics at

WCU and where Lofquist has served as associate vice chancellor for academic affairs since 2005. Her responsibilities include curriculum development; the faculty reappointment, tenure and promotion process; course evaluations; professional development for department heads; the academic calendar; publication of the undergraduate catalog and faculty handbook; and oversight of residential summer sessions. Lofquist came to work at Western Carolina in 1993 as a faculty member. In 1997, she earned her doctorate in curriculum and teaching from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

1979



Photo courtesy of Georgia Tech Sports Information Office

In December, **Paul Johnson**, head football coach at Georgia Tech, was voted Atlantic Coast Conference coach of the year by the Atlantic Coast Sports Media Association, earning 46 of 67 possible votes. "It was a great group of assistant coaches and a group of players and there's a lot of outstanding coaches in the ACC," Johnson said in a newspaper interview. "So it's humbling to win the award." Johnson has coached the Yellow Jackets for a year, leading the team to a winning season when critics expected the inexperienced team to do poorly.

1982

Mary Deck MAEd, professor of counseling at Western Carolina, received the 2008 Ruth McSwain Distinguished Professional Service Award for Outstanding Contributions to the School Counseling Profession, the highest award given by the North Carolina School Counselor Association. Deck, a resident of Waynesville and native of Forest City, joined the WCU faculty in 1990 and has experience as a school counselor, social worker and special education teacher. Her education includes a bachelor's degree in psychology from Appalachian State University, a master's degree in special education from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a doctorate in counselor education from the University of Virginia.

1983

The Asheville Citizen-Times recently named **Jim Buchanan** as editor of the newspaper's editorial pages. A native of Jackson County who now lives in Clyde, Buchanan was editor of the Western Carolinian during his college days, and edited the Cashiers Crossroads Chronicle before accepting a position with the Asheville daily. Prior to moving into the editorial department, he worked as a copy editor, and sports and humor columnist at the paper. "I'll just do my best to try to serve the readers of the Citizen-Times and the people and communities of Western North Carolina," he said.



FROM WCU TO TBS

Recent Graduate Lands His First Job in Master Control at Turner Broadcasting

By JOHN KENYON

When **Joe Mullins '08** started working in master control at Turner Broadcasting System in Atlanta, he began a career that most in his profession do not qualify for immediately after college. "There were 100 applicants, and only six people were chosen for the positions. One had 13 years experience, two had nine years experience, and another two had three years experience," said Mullins. "I was the only one hired who had no official experience, and I was also the youngest by about eight years."

As a student, Mullins earned television operator professional certification from the national Society of Broadcast Engineers. "For a student to accomplish this while still in school is outstanding," said Pat Acheson, assistant professor of communication and director of studio operations for WCU's Center for Applied Technology television studio.

Mullins also attributes the weight of his resume to the leadership role he took at Channel 62, WCU's student-run, closed-circuit TV station. "When I was with Channel 62, we went to a trade show, and I found an automation server that had programming scheduling software in it," said Mullins. "I got approval for purchase of the system, digitally stored all of TV-62's programming on the server, and came up with the operating standards."

The combination of hands-on experience and professional certification made Mullins stand out. "My production work, internship for Sony at the National Association of Broadcasters conference, and SBE certification caught their attention," said Mullins.

Of course, a person has to get a foot in the door to even be considered for an interview. "Pat Acheson took a group of us for a tour of TBS and CNN, and on that day I dropped resumes off everywhere we went. That led to the initial callback," said Mullins.

Although Mullins has a full schedule these days, he still finds time to return to WCU to speak to students about preparing for their future. "I still come back to talk to classes because I want to help students excel," he said.



classNOTES

Mark R. Cartmill MAEd is Berea College's new director of athletics and Seabury Center Complex. Cartmill will provide vision and leadership for Berea's athletic program and for the facilities and activities of Seabury Center, a multiuse events complex. Cartmill served as director of recreation and athletics and was men's head basketball coach at Paul Smith's College in New York for 16 years, and also has worked in an athletic capacity at the University of Maine at Augusta and the College of St. Joseph in Vermont. He and his wife, Lori, reside in Berea and have a son, Connor, a freshman in high school.

1986



Terry Price was installed as global vice president of Hospitality Financial and Technology Professionals at the international association's 2008 convention. Price is the executive information technology manager at the Grove Park Inn Resort and Spa in Asheville. He already was involved with HFTP, serving on its board and various councils, as a contributor to its magazine, as a speaker at HFTP conferences and as a developer of

online, topic-based communities and education sessions.

1989

Suzanne Yount Farlow MAT '04, a teacher of exceptional children at West Henderson High School, has achieved national board certification.



1990

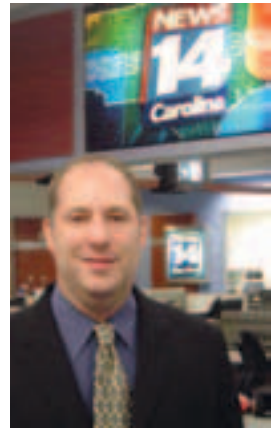
Laura Plumb Duda is the new vice president of corporate communications with the Exelon Corp., one of the nation's largest electric utilities, with customers in Illinois and Pennsylvania. Previously, Duda spent 11 years as director of communications with TECO Energy.

James G. Maxham, associate professor in the University of Virginia's McIntire School of Commerce, researches "organizational justice," which focuses on how companies' treatment of their employees can bolster or erode customer satisfaction and loyalty. "You can almost be assured that if your employees aren't happy with you, your customers aren't going to be happy, either," Maxham said. Interested in global marketing, Maxham in May led 39 students on a two-week, research-oriented program through China that offered a close-up view of the country's consumer behavior and cross-cultural marketing strategies. He earned his master's degree from the University of South Florida and his doctorate from Louisiana State University. A native of Pahokee, Fla., Maxham recalled that, when applying for his undergraduate degree, a brochure from Western Carolina that read "Discover Yourself" caught his attention. "That was what I wanted to do: discover myself," Maxham said.



1992

Bryan Queen MPA '94 is new manager of television's News 14 Carolina Coastal, which provides coverage in the Wilmington, Jacksonville and Morehead City areas. Queen's extensive North Carolina ties helped him win the position. He has worked with several news organizations in the state, including WLOS-TV in Asheville, WXII-TV in Winston-Salem and the NBC News Channel in Charlotte. Most recently, he spent four years as planning producer at MSNBC in New York.



1994



Trina Frizzell Orr MBA '01 is the new director of the Office of Financial Aid at Western Carolina. Previously associate director of financial aid, Orr started working in the office more than 17 years ago as a work-study student. She has been responsible for the management, development and implementation of multiple programs and computer systems in the office. "I have a commitment to serving students and their financial needs," Orr said.

2003

Mitchell Carr Hall recently completed his second season as defensive coordinator at North Greenville University in Tigerville, S.C. Hall was a four-year letterman at linebacker at Western Carolina, where he also coached linebackers for two years as a graduate assistant. Previous to joining NGU's staff, Hall coached running backs and tight ends for two years at Presbyterian College in Clinton, S.C.

2004

Michelle Gorton, a former Catamount volleyball player, is the new volleyball coach at Charlotte High School in Punta Gorda, Fla.

Stelfanie Williams MPM is the new dean of continuing education at Central Carolina Community College in Sanford. In the past, Williams has served as dean of continuing education at Sandhills Community College and as Central Carolina's director of continuing education in Chatham County. She is in the process of completing her dissertation in an adult and higher education doctorate program at N.C. State University.



2005

Thomas Jarrett Wishon is assigned to the Mission Focus Team through his work with the Charlotte Police Department. The team has adopted a proactive policing style to curb felony crime in the northeastern Charlotte neighborhoods. Wishon's team is involved with active surveillance and undercover work, narcotics investigations and serving warrants, among other tasks. While at Western Carolina, Wishon played football and was a four-year member of the Southern Conference All-Academic Team.

2007

Brad Botts MPM is the new director of operations with Strategic Employee Benefit Services, a Raleigh-area company that provides employee benefit services through Northwestern Mutual Financial Network. Botts will assist SEBS in developing an operational framework as the company continues its growth across North Carolina. Prior to joining SEBS, Botts built and managed several start-up organizations, and also worked as vice president of operations with both the All-Star Group and Solution Services Management Group. He and his wife, Sheri, have two grown children.

Krysta Buchanan, a Catamount cheerleader from 2003 to 2005, married Zeke Cooper in October. The reception was atop the historic Jackson County courthouse steps (at right), where Cooper proposed. Cooper attended Western Carolina for two years before transferring to the University of Tennessee. The couple lives in Sylva.

Artist Natalie Pantuso created a depiction in charcoal of "The Last Supper," inspired by the French painter Philippe de Champaigne, on display outside the sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church in Gastonia.



PURPLE AND GOLD REUNIONS 2009

"Come Home to Cullowhee"

For Western Carolina alumni spanning the decades from the 1930s through the 1960s who are looking for an excuse for a mountain getaway this summer, the WCU Alumni Association has just the ticket. Back by popular demand, it's the fourth annual Purple and Gold Reunion weekend series.

JUNE 5-6 – ALL WCTC ALUMNI FROM THE 1930S AND 1940S
HONORED CLASSES: 1939 AND 1949

JUNE 26-28 – ALL WCC ALUMNI FROM THE 1950S
HONORED CLASS: 1959

JULY 17-19 – ALL WCC AND WCU ALUMNI FROM THE 1960S
HONORED CLASS: 1969

For more information, contact the Office of Alumni Affairs
local 828.227.7335 or toll free 877.440.9990
mramsey@wcu.edu | <http://wcu-alumni.com>

Stephanie Rockett

has entered Wake Forest University's doctoral program in analytical chemistry. Rockett left high school without a degree, later earning a GED. After spending two years at McDowell Technical Community College, Rockett entered WCU in the fall of 2005, majoring in chemistry and biology. She attended Wake Virginia University for her master's degree, and entered Wake Forest in January 2008 on a full tuition scholarship. Rockett comes from a long line of Western Carolina grads, including father **Clyde Steven Rockett '72**, her uncle **Gary Keith Rockett '64** and aunt and uncle **Harriet Hunt Allen '77** and **Larry Thomas "Tommy" Rockett '77**.



Lauren Smathers MBA is the new owner/manager of her family's business, the 23-employee Carolina Truck and Body Co. in West Asheville. Smathers grew up around the business, which her grandfather, Geary Cordell, ran until his death in December 2007. Her great-grandfather, Luther Cordell, started



Photo by Anne Fitten Glenn

the company in 1929. The company sells and services medium- and heavy-duty trucks and provides a 24-hour wrecker service. "I was always my grandfather's little girl. I lived with my grandparents throughout high school, and I'd always recommend business ideas to my grandfather at the dinner table," Smathers said in a newspaper interview. Smathers now co-owns the business with her grandmother, Gwynn Cordell.

2008

Chelsie Nichole Graham recently was hired by Cherokee County Schools in Murphy as a work force counselor at Tri-County Early College High School.

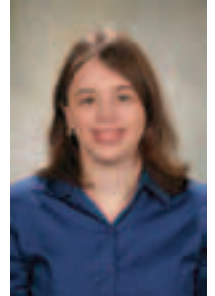
Tim Osment MA recently joined the Cashiers Historical Society in the newly created position of executive director. Osment, a native of Jackson County, has been involved in many regional history projects, including the Florence Mill Oral History Project in Forest City, the Digital Heritage Network at Western Carolina and the Appalachian Women's Museum in Dillsboro. The historical society works to preserve and interpret the Zachary-Tolbert House and Cashiers Valley. "It is easy to see how folks in the Cashiers Valley are proud of their heritage, love their present, and are excited about their future," Osment said. The society



partnered with Western Carolina's Mountain Heritage Center and the Fine and Performing Arts Center for one of the first events Osment helped organize, the "19th-Century Plain-Style Furniture" symposium held in May.

Amanda Stevens is a page designer and copy editor with Freedom ENC, a family of newspapers and special publications. She does layout for newspapers in Kinston, New Bern and Jacksonville.

Erin Thomas is in her first year of studies at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine in Lewisburg, W.Va. Thomas began her college career at McDowell Technical Community College, which she attended while living in a homeless shelter, where staff helped her apply for school grants and even gave her gas money to get to class. "Living at the mission was a big turning point for me because that's when I realized that I had to get my life together," Thomas said. Osteopathy is the treatment of skeletal problems, and most osteopathic doctors are family primary care physicians.



ALUMNI DEATHS

Cecil L. Allison MAEd '66, Dec. 24; Jacksonville, Fla.

Jessie Ruth Angel '52 MAEd '60, Nov. 16; Gastonia.

John Edward Ashe '72, Oct. 15; Mills River.

Anna Jean Plott Battle '31, Dec. 17; Andrews.

Wayne T. Brackett Sr. '70, Aug. 2; Morganton.

Christopher Stephen Bunker '04, Jan. 1; Asheville.

David Noland Cabe '84, Dec. 31; Waynesville.

Colin Keith Campbell '68, Nov. 19; Sylva.

Edgar Carpenter '49 MA '71, Oct. 11; Franklin.

Alva Jo Moody Carver '45, Nov. 18; Maggie Valley.

Nada Garber Cooke MAEd '82 EDS '86, Nov. 17; Lake Junaluska.

Janet Louise Robeson Curphey '51, Nov. 1; Waynesville.

Rebecca Ann Davis MA '87, Oct. 24; Black Mountain.

Jack Donald Dockery Sr. '55, Oct. 28; Hyde Park, N.Y.

Sherri Lynn Boyd England '87, Oct. 5; Weaverville.

Emmett B. Feimster '51 MA '59, Oct. 8; Newton.

Sarah Braswell Foster '44, Nov. 20; Hendersonville.

Marcus William Galyean MBA '78 MIT '85 MPA '88, Nov. 30; Asheville.

William H. Gaultney '73, Oct. 15; Georgetown, S.C.

Gary S. Green '79, Dec. 8; Tignall, Ga.

Woodrow P. "Woody" Griffin Sr. MAEd '57, Sept. 28; Asheville.

Rose Garrett Hair '52, Oct. 12; Sylva.

Rebecca Lanning Hazelrigg '69, Dec. 27; Asheville.

Terry M. Helms '73, Dec. 1; Wallburg.

Frank Herbert Jr. '42, Jan. 2; Asheville and Gulfport, Fla.

Billie Fralo Howard '56, Nov. 10; Hendersonville.

Richard C. Jackson '59, April 23; Banner Elk.

Alma Henderson Jarvis '51, Nov. 28; Marion.

Jane McCroba Kirkpatrick '69 MAEd '73, Nov. 15; Clyde.

Max Champion Ledbetter '66, Dec. 13; Marion.

Julie Abernathy Ledford '95, Sept. 13; Gastonia.

Scott Alan Mason '91, Dec. 3; Clarkesville, Ga.

James Theron Mayfield '52, Dec. 21; Germantown, Tenn.

John Harrill McBrayer Jr. '70, Dec. 22, New Braunfels, Texas.

EXECUTIVE ACTION

A Former Governor's Economic Adviser Joins the WCU College of Business

By BILL STUDENC

Kenneth E. Flynt '71, longtime banking executive and former governor's economic adviser, was recently appointed to the new position of associate dean of advancement in Western Carolina's College of Business. Also a faculty member in the department of accounting, finance, information systems and economics, Flynt earned his bachelor's degree in economics. He also earned a master's degree in economics from North Carolina State University in 1972.

During his 36-year career, Flynt has been a leading bank entrepreneur and executive. In addition to serving as chief executive officer of Workmen's Savings Bank in Mount Airy, he was founding CEO of Enterprise Bank in Raleigh and Independence Bank in Knersville. He also was CEO and a co-founder of Equity Services Inc., a major mortgage bank headquartered in Raleigh, and of 1st Medallion Mortgage Corp, a subsidiary of River Bancorp Inc. in Greensboro.

Flynt served a four-year term as chief economic adviser to Gov. James B. Hunt Jr. In that position, he worked closely with state government agencies, local governments and



leading businesses in North Carolina. He represented the governor in the state's General Assembly and in various national forums.

"Ken is an exceptional talent," said Ronald A. Johnson, dean of the College of Business. "He is a wonderful example for our students of how they can make a difference in their world. He is a well-rounded, successful

leader and we are proud that he has joined our team."

In addition to his endeavors in the banking field, Flynt started or managed other businesses, including retail and software companies. He has performed in an advisory or board capacity with more than a dozen firms and sits on six nonprofit boards or committees, where he is engaged as a counselor and fundraiser.

"I am glad to be back at Western Carolina to assist the College of Business as an engine of economic and entrepreneurial activity for Western North Carolina," Flynt said. "I look forward to working with our business and industry partners to meet the needs of the community and to ensure that the graduates we send out into the work force are 'business ready.'"

Horace W. "Stormy" Meredith '40, Oct. 19; Syracuse, N.Y.

Alice Scruggs Messer '53, Oct. 6; Cliffside.

Thomas Bryant Murray '83, Nov. 27; Mooresville.

Wilma Ruby Littlechild Muse MAEd '77, Nov. 7; Asheville.

Christine Compton Nalley MAEd '63, Oct. 8; Marion, Ind.

Evelyn Russell Nettles MA '68, Nov. 18; Moncks Corner, S.C.

Deborah Dyer Neves '69 MAEd '72, Dec. 8; Black Mountain.

Maybur Henson Norton '43, Dec. 3; Franklin.

Clark Pennell Sr. '49 MAEd '53, Dec. 29; Weaverville.

Sarah Margaret Bird Rentz '45 MA '53, Oct. 29; Raleigh.

Patsy Lois Vess Robinson '85, Dec. 1; Asheville.

Lucille R. Sherrill '41, Sept. 26; Knersville.

Martha T. Simmons MAEd '78, Sept. 18; Marion.

Stephen D. Smith '73, Oct. 12; Columbia, S.C.

Warren Gerold Smith Sr. '52 MA '53, Dec. 4; Wadesboro.

Cecil Lamar Taylor MAEd '72, Dec. 16; Clarksville, Ga.

Quinton Toxey '87, Sept. 11; Indian Trail.

Jerry Winfred "Foxy" Webb '65, Dec. 27; Stanley.

Leona Hardin Weber '34, Dec. 3; Forest City.

Edward Jordan Whitehead '80, Nov. 2; Winston-Salem.

Barbara Bradley Wilson MAEd '88, Nov. 13; Sunny View.

UNIVERSITY DEATHS

Audrey Mae VanEynde Cox, retired staff member, Dec. 27; Sylva.

Charles Maxwell Neufeld, former professor of economics, Dec. 22; Charleston, S.C.

Robert L. Parr, retired professor of English, Dec. 7; Lexington.

Nettie Haywood Reid, widow of the late Paul A. Reid, president of Western Carolina from 1949-56 and 1957-68, Nov. 10; Southern Pines.

Dr. Ed Sutton, friend and benefactor, Sept. 20; Fresno, Calif.

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Please send story ideas and suggestions to

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or via e-mail: bstudenc@wcu.edu

Postmaster: Send address changes to

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Room 242, H.F. Robinson Building
Cullowhee, N.C. 28723

eventsCALENDAR

FEBRUARY 2009

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5

Southern Circuit Tour of Independent Filmmakers – “Tru Loved,” with director Stewart Wade and producer Antonio Brown. 7 p.m. University Center theater. (828) 227-3622

Vance Trull – Old-time and bluegrass music concert. 7 p.m. Mountain Heritage Center auditorium. (828) 227-7129

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6

“Rave On!” – A musical tribute to Buddy Holly. Part of the Galaxy of Stars Series. 7:30 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7

Open house – For prospective students and their families. (828) 227-2672

Lady Catamount basketball – vs. Appalachian State. 4 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (828) 227-7338

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10

Artist's reception – James Tanner, “Inside/Inside Out.” Exhibit of ceramic sculpture through March 8. Artist talk at 4 p.m. with wine and cheese to follow. Fine Art Museum. (828) 227-3591

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14

Catamount basketball – vs. Appalachian State. 7 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (828) 227-7338

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Parsons Dance Company – Contemporary American dance. 7:30 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479

MARCH 2009

THURSDAY, MARCH 5

Ken Bloom – Old-time and bluegrass music concert. 7 p.m. Mountain Heritage Center auditorium. (828) 227-7129

THURSDAY-MONDAY, MARCH 5-9

Lady Catamount basketball – Southern Conference Tournament. Chattanooga, Tenn.



FRIDAY-MONDAY, MARCH 6-9

Catamount basketball – Southern Conference Tournament. Chattanooga, Tenn.

THURSDAY, MARCH 12

Southern Circuit Tour of Independent Filmmakers – “Random Lunacy: Videos from the Road Less Traveled,” with producers/directors Stephanie Silber and Victor Zimet. 7 p.m. University Center theater. (828) 227-3622

THURSDAY-SUNDAY, MARCH 26-28

“Fiddler on the Roof” – Musical directed by Terrence Mann. 7:30 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, 3 p.m. Sunday. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479





MONDAY-THURSDAY, MARCH 30-APRIL 2

Spring Literary Festival – Authors including Manette Ansay, Robert Conley, Jeffrey Lent, Ron Rash and Jewell Parker Rhodes. University Center theater. (828) 227-7264

APRIL 2009

TUESDAY, APRIL 14

“Rigoletto” – Opera by Verdi. Performed by Asheville Lyric Opera. 7:30 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479



WCU Makes Plans for Campus Visit by Actor, Native-American Activist

Plans are in the works for a visit to Western Carolina University this spring by motion picture actor Wes Studi, best known for his performances as a Pawnee warrior in “Dances With Wolves” and the vengeful Magua in “The Last of the Mohicans.”

Studi is tentatively scheduled to be on campus **MONDAY, APRIL 6**, to share stories about a life that has taken him from the Cherokee boarding schools of northern Oklahoma to the bright lights of Hollywood, including his career as an actor, his role in Cherokee language preservation efforts and his work as Native-American activist.

The program, titled “An Evening with Wes Studi,” is set for 7:30 p.m. in WCU’s Fine and Performing Arts Center. Admission is free of charge, but tickets are required.

For information, contact the FAPAC box office at (828) 227-2479.



THURSDAY, APRIL 16

Southern Circuit Tour of Independent Filmmakers – “Bama Girl,” with producer/director Rachel Goslins. 7 p.m. University Center theater. (828) 227-3622

SATURDAY, APRIL 18

Open house – For prospective students and their families. (828) 227-2672

WEDNESDAY-SUNDAY, APRIL 22-26

“Almost, Maine” – Play explores love’s surprising nature in a New England town. Directed by Peter Savage. 7:30 p.m. Wednesday-Saturday, 3 p.m. Sunday. Hoey Auditorium. (828) 227-2479

MAY 2009

FRIDAY, MAY 1

Spring Dance Showcase – A variety of dance genres and music. 7:30 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479

FRIDAY, MAY 8

Commencement for graduate students – 7 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (828) 227-7317

“The American Piano Show” with Linda Gentile – The music of Gershwin, Berlin, Rogers and Hammerstein, and more. Part of the Galaxy of Stars Series. 7:30 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479

SATURDAY, MAY 9

Commencement for undergraduate students – 2 p.m. Ramsey Regional Activity Center. (828) 227-7317



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Western Carolina dance students will take the stage during the annual Spring Dance Showcase. The event, which features alumni, faculty, staff and students performing a variety of dance genres, is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Friday, May 1, at the Fine and Performing Arts Center.

